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NICHOL'S SERIES OF STANDARD DIVINES.

PURITAN PERIOD.

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With General Preface

BY JOHN C. MILLER, D.D.,

LINCOLN COLLEGE; HONORARY CANON OF WORCESTER; RECTOR OF ST MARTIN'S, BIRMINGHAM.

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THE

# WORKS OF HENRY SMITH.

VOL. I.

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# THE WORKS

OF

# HENRY SMITH;

1560-1591

INCLUDING

## SERMONS, TREATISES, PRAYERS, AND POEMS.

WITH LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY THOMAS FULLER, B.D.

1608-1661

AND OTHER BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

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# THE LIFE OF MR HENRY SMITH.

## BY THOMAS FULLER, B.D.

PREFIXED TO THE FIRST COLLECTED EDITIONS OF HIS WORKS.

---

WHAT is true of the river Nilus, that its fountain is hid and obscure, but its fall or influx into the midland sea eminently known, is appliable to many learned men, the places of whose births generally are either wholly concealed, or at the best uncertain, whilst the place of their death is made remarkable. For as few did take notice of their coming out of their attiring-house, so their well acting on the stage commanded all eyes to observe their returning thereunto.

But this general rule takes not place in the present subject of our pen, Mr Henry Smith, born at Withcok in Leicestershire, of gentle extraction, which here shall not be insisted on, seeing he that is rich of himself needs not to borrow any lustre from another; yet were it the more allowable for us to dwell awhile on the honour of his parentage, seeing he himself would not sojourn thereat, declining all notice of such accidental advantages.

He was bred in the famous University of Oxford, where first he was *condus* before he was *promus;* filled himself, that he might in due time pour out to others. Nor did he proceed a divine *per saltum*, as too many now-a-days, I mean, leaping over all human arts and sciences, but furnished himself plentifully therewith.

On the other side, he was none of those who in the university wither the stalk they grow on, and, out of idleness, bury their talents in the ground, putting them out, because they will not put them out, extinguishing their abilities because they will not employ them; but he was resolved to improve his utmost in the ministerial calling, for the glory of God and converting of souls.

Here he triumphed over that temptation wherewith many had been overcome. Plentiful was his estate for the present, and for the future he was heir-apparent to a large patrimony.[1] Preaching was presented unto him by some as fit for the refuge of a younger brother, not for the choice of an heir: his rich relations might better advantage him in the lucrative profession of the law. But he was so far from falling or stumbling, that he did not stop at these carnal considerations, but easily trampled upon them.

But a greater scruple troubled him, as unsatisfied in the point of subscription, and the lawfulness of some ceremonies. He was loath to make a rent, either in his own conscience or in the church, wherefore he resolved on this expedient, not to undertake a pastoral charge, but contented himself with a lecturer's place at St Clement Danes, without Temple-Bar.

It may be truly said of him, he was one peaceable in Israel; for, notwithstanding his aforesaid scrupling at conformity, and distasting the violent pressing thereof, as by some passages in this his book may appear, he could unite with them in affections from whom he dissented in judgment. He disdained railing and invectives, the symptom of a sick wit; and if he chanced to fall on a sharp reproof, he wrapped it up in such pleasing expressions, that the persons concerned therein had their souls divided betwixt love and anger at the hearing thereof.

William Cecil, Lord Burleigh, and Treasurer of England, to whom he dedicated his Sermons, very favourably reflected upon him; and he was often the screen who saved Mr Smith from the scorching, interposing his greatness betwixt him and the anger of some episcopal officers. And it is argument enough to prove the eminency of Mr Smith, that so great a stateman as this Lord-Treasurer set a character of his peculiar respect upon him.

Indeed, that Lord was as thoroughpaced as any in England for the body of episcopal government, but not for the wens thereof, when some quiet Nonconformists were prosecuted to persecution by vexatious informers. In which case he often endeavoured to qualify the matter, and rescued them from their violent adversaries. Mr Travers, not unacquainted with Mr Smith (all know the nearness of the Temple to St Clement Danes), often tasted of this Lord's benignity on that occasion.

[1] Sir Roger Smith of Edmundsthorp, in the county of Leicester, lately deceased, was his younger brother.

To return to Mr Smith: he was commonly called the *Silver-tongued preacher*, and that was but one metal below St Chrysostom himself. His church was so crowded with auditors, that persons of good quality brought their own pews with them, I mean their legs, to stand thereupon in the alleys. Their ears did so attend to his lips, their hearts to their ears, that he held the rudder of their affections in his hands, so that he could steer them whither he was pleased; and he was pleased to steer them only to God's glory and their own good. Take one instance of many of the great prevalency he had with his auditory;—

He preached a sermon on Sarah's nursing of Isaac, and thereupon grounded that general doctrine, that it was the duty of all mothers to nurse their own children, allowing dispensation to such who were unsufficienced by weakness, want of milk, or any avouchable impediment. He pressed the application without respect of persons, high or low, rich or poor, one or other; taxing them for pride, or laziness, or both, who would not do that office to the fruit of their own womb.

It is almost incredible how many persons of honour and worship, ladies and great gentlewomen, with whom his congregation was constantly crowded, were affected herewith, so that I have been informed, from such whose credit I count it a sin to suspect, that they presently remanded their children from the vicinage round about London, and endeavoured to discharge the second moiety of a mother, and to nurse them whom they had brought into the world.

I confess some conceived Mr Smith, because a bachelor, an incompetent judge hereof, as unacquainted with feminine infirmities, so that, as St Augustine on another account was called *durus pater infantum*, so Mr Smith might be termed *durus doctor matrum*. However, if all things be impartially considered, no just cause of exception can be found either with the doctrine or application.

The words of the wise, saith Solomon, Eccles. xii. 11, are like nails fastened by the masters of the assemblies. And certainly this Smith had as great a dexterity as any in fastening them in the judgments of his hearers by his solid reasons, fancies by his proper similitudes, memories by his orderly method, and consciences by his home applications.

Some fifteen years since I consulted the *Jesses*, I mean such who passed for old men in the parish of St Clement Danes, but

could recover very little of them, either of the time or manner of his death, save that they conceived his disease was a consumption. I perused also the church register, and found it silent concerning the date of his death; for which this reason was alleged, that a little before his departure out of this life, he departed the city to have the benefit of country air. But by the exactest proportion of time, his death may be conjectured to have been about the year 1600.

THOMAS FULLER.

---

The preceding sketch of the life of our author contains nearly all that is known concerning him. Still there are a few additional facts which we have ascertained, and which we have thought it best to embody in a few supplementary notes. For references to some of these facts we are indebted to various papers which have appeared from time to time in that useful periodical, *Notes and Queries*.

I. *His family.* His genealogy is very fully traced in Nichol's History of Leicestershire. From it we learn that William Smith, Gent., the great-grandfather of our author, was Lord of Withcote, at the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th century. He died in 1512, leaving one son, John.

This John married Dorothy Cave, by whom he had ten sons and two daughters. He died in 1545.

His eldest son, Roger, about 1575, sold Withcote to his brother Ambrose (fourth son of John) who had made a large fortune as a silk-mercer, in Cheapside, London. This Ambrose died in 1584, leaving three sons and four daughters.

Erasmus, third son of John, settled at Husband's Bosworth, was the father of our Henry, and of two other sons, as stated by Fuller. The first wife of Erasmus, and mother of our author, appears to have been a Miss Bybb. His second wife was Margaret Cecil, sister of the famous Lord Burghley, and widow of Roger Cave, Esq.

We shall mention only two or three of the numerous relatives of our author.

One of the daughters of Ambrose Smith, above mentioned, was Dorothea, who was first married to Benedict Barneham, an alder-

man of London, by whom she had four daughters, one of whom became in due time the wife of the great Francis Bacon. Mrs Barneham was married secondly to Sir John Pakington ; thirdly, to Lord Kilmurry ; and fourthly, to the Earl of Kelly. It is pretty plainly hinted by Nichols, that this lady might not have attained so easily her place in the baronetage and peerage, had alderman Barneham's will been different from what it was. We care not for this ; as we introduce the lady's name at all, only to point out the connection between our author's family, and the author of the *Novum Organum*. It is surely worthy of note, that our author's full cousin was mother-in-law of 'the greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind.'

The above-mentioned Ambrose was succeeded by his eldest son, Henry, who died about 1605, leaving an only son, Henry, who died in 1623, and was succeeded by an only son, Henry, who was afterwards well known as 'Regicide Smith,' from the prominent part which he took in the king's trial.

As stated by Fuller in a note, our author's younger brother was Roger Smith of Edmondsthorpe. He was knighted at Whitehall in 1635, and died in 1655, aged 84. On Sir Roger's tombstone in Edmondsthorpe, it is stated that the family was 'by females passing through the names of Ashby, Zouch, and Conan, Duke of Brittany, descended from Henry the First, king of England.'

II. *His education.* In the *Athenæ Oxonienses*, it is stated that he was matriculated in 1575 as a member of Lincoln College, thus : 'Henricus Smith, Leicestrensis, generosus, ætat. 15.' 'What stay he made in the same house, or whether he was the same Henry Smith who received the benefaction of Jo. Claymond in Brazenose College in 1574, or whether he took the degree of bachelor of arts, it appears not. Sure it is, that having some ecclesiastical employment conferred upon him, he was absent from the university for some time ; and at length, in 1583, did take the degree of master of arts as a member of Hart-Hall, being then esteemed the miracle and wonder of his age, for his prodigious memory, and for his fluent, eloquent, and practical way of preaching.'

From a communication by Messrs C. H. and Thomson Cooper, in *Notes and Queries*, Aug. 20. 1859, we learn that before going to Oxford he was admitted a fellow-commoner of Queen's college, Cambridge, 17th July 1573. As, however, 'he was not matriculated

at Cambridge, the probability is that he did not continue there long.' Perhaps it may have been the benefaction of Jo. Claymond that attracted him from the one university to the other; but still it does not seem to be very likely that he should have been admitted a fellow-commoner at Cambridge in 1573, presented to a benefaction in Brazenose College, Oxford, in 1574, matriculated as a student of Lincoln College, Oxford, in 1575, and graduated as a member of Hart-Hall in 1583. We suspect that at least one other member of the Smith family must be mixed up with him.

In the communication just referred to, the Messrs Cooper express doubts as to the correctness of Wood's assertion, that it was he who took the degree of Master of Arts in 1583. This they do upon this ground, that 'our Henry Smith, although he refers to his having been at a university, never calls himself M.A., nor do we find him so called by his contemporaries.' Now it ought to be observed that the fact of his being the graduate of 1583, is the point on which Wood speaks with perfect confidence, while he leaves other questions of his identity in doubt. As to his not calling himself Master of Arts, or being so called by others, we are perfectly aware that the Messrs Cooper are abundantly more conversant with English university customs than we are; but we suspect that the designation '*Mr* Henry Smith,' by which he is generally noted on the title pages of his separate sermons, is equivalent to 'Henry Smith, M.A.' We have had occasion to examine many Scottish lists of the 16th century, and have come to the conclusion that in them the prefix *Mr* or *Maister* is usually employed to designate masters of arts. We do not know whether the same usage prevailed in England, but we think it highly probable.

We do not know precisely what was the nature of the ecclesiastical employment which withdrew him from Oxford; but it was probably a curacy in Leicestershire; for we find him there dealing with a visionary or imposter called Robert Dickons, in the year 1582. Yet at this time, if Wood's statement of his matriculation at Oxford is correct, he was only twenty-two years old. Probably he was living at his father's house at Market Bosworth's, doing duty for the clergyman of the parish, when he was applied to by the 'Lords Justices,' at the instigation, we presume, of his uncle, Bryant Cave, the high sheriff of the county, to take this Dickons in hand. An account of his dealings with him, and the sermon which he preached on the occasion, are amongst his extant works. No copy of these

that we have seen bears any date; but in Fuller's Church History, the case of Dickons is related under the year 1582.

After this he seems to have gone to prosecute theological studies under the direction of Mr Richard Greenham, an influential clergyman of considerable note among the early puritans.

III. *His patrimony.* Some have understood Fuller's statement, that he was urged by his friends to choose a secular profession, as more suited than the ministry to the eldest son of a wealthy squire, as implying that on entering the church he forfeited his patrimony. Now nothing of this kind is said or implied. He did not indeed succeed to the family property; but that was because his father outlived him. We have no reason to think that a protestant clergyman in those days was precluded from the possession of landed property.

IV. *His appointment at St Clement Danes.* The fullest account that we have found of his appointment to this lectureship is the following, in Strype's Life of Bishop Aylmer,

'Mr Henry Smith, an eloquent and a witty man, had the last year, viz., 1587, become Reader or Lecturer at St Clement Danes without Temple-Bar, at the desire of many of the parishioners, and by the favour of the Lord Treasurer, who dwelt in the said parish, and yielded contribution to him. This is the Smith whose sermons have been a common family book even to this day, and often reprinted. He was the son of a gentleman of Leicestershire, and bred for a little while in Oxford; but desiring to spend more time there, his father, whatever the reason was, would not yield unto his suit. Soon after his coming from Oxford, he lived and followed his studies with Richard Greenham, a pious minister in the country, but not thoroughly affected to the orders of the church established; and his principles he seemed to have infused into Smith. The Lord Treasurer took notice of the man, especially when he put in for the preacher's place in the parish of St Clement's. Therefore he obtained a testimonial and character from Greenham to the said lord; to whom, after some preface in his letter, as considering his honour's place, and rare wisdom in discerning of gifts, and his own unmeetness to commend, and that there were many better means to inform himself, which he might have; at length he thus wrote of him, "That he would not speak of his human litera-

ture, whereof he supposed Smith himself had given him [the Lord Treasurer] some small token (he meant, I suppose, by a sermon preached before him), but he had perceived him to have been well exercised in the holy Scriptures, religious and devout in mind, moderate and sober in opinions and affection, discreet and temperate in his behaviour, industrious in his studies and affairs, and, as he hoped, of an humble spirit and upright heart, joined with the fervent zeal of the glory of God and health of souls. Which mixture of God's gifts put him in hopes that God hereafter might be much glorified in him, specially if he might have tarried in the University until his gifts were grown unto some more maturity. In which particular, he added, he had earnestly dealt with him unto the same end [and so had the Lord Treasurer], but he still answered that he could not obtain that favour of his father."

'In short he was permitted to read (that is, to preach a lecture) at St Clement's, where one Harewood was now parson.'

V. *His suspension.* The continuation of the above extract gives an account of his suspension.

'But the next year, being the year 1588, our bishop, being informed that he had spoken in his sermon some words derogatory to the Common Prayer, neither had subscribed the Articles, wherein was contained the approbation of the said book, suspended him from preaching a while. His own case he drew up briefly, for the information, it seems, of the Lord Treasurer, which was as follows:—.

'*Reasons objected and alleged by the Bishop of London against Henry Smith, preacher of St Clement's without Temple-Bar, as causes for which he hath proceeded to the suspension of the said Henry from the exercise of his ministry.*

'I. That I was chosen by a popular election, as his Lordship termeth it, that is, by the minister and congregation, without his Lordship's licence.

'II. That I have preached against the Book of Common Prayer.

'III. That I have not yielded my subscription to certain articles which his Lordship required at my hands.

'*Mine answer to the same.*

'"First, touching my calling hither, I was recommended to the

parish by certain godly preachers, which had heard me preach in other places in this city; and thereupon accepted of by the parish, and entertained with a stipend raised by voluntary contribution; in which sort they had heretofore entertained others without any such question or exception. Secondarily, his Lordship, calling me to preach at Paul's Cross, never moved any such question to me. Nevertheless, if any error have been committed herein either by me or the parish, through ignorance, our joint desire is to have his Lordship's good allowance and approbation for the exercise of my function in his Lordship's diocese.

'"Touching the second, however his Lordship hath been informed against me, I never used speech in any of my sermons against the said book of Common Prayer; whereof the parish doth bear me witness in this supplication to yonr Lordship.

'"Concerning the third, I refuse not to subscribe to any articles, which the law of the realm doth require of men of my calling: acknowledging with all humbleness and loyalty Her Majesty's sovereignty in all causes, and over all persons within Her Highness's dominions; and yielding my full consent to all the articles of faith and doctrine taught and ratified in this church, according to a statute in that behalf provided, the thirteenth year of Her Majesty's reign. And therefore beseech his Lordship not to urge upon me any other subscription than the law of God, and the laws positive of this realm, do require."'

The Messrs Cooper, in the communication already referred to, suggest that the Lord Treasurer Burghley's interest in Smith may have been in some measure due to the fact that his Lordship's sister was Mr Smith's stepmother. This, of course, might have had a measure of influence; but it is manifest that Lord Burghley had a high esteem for Henry Smith personally, while there is abundant evidence that it was by no means a rare thing for him to oppose the measures of Archbishop Whitgift and Bishop Aylmer. In every collection of letters of the time, we have multitudes in which his Lordship remonstrates with these ecclesiastical potentates as to the stringent measures which they employed for suppressing views different from their own.

VI. *His subsequent ministry in St Clement's.* Strype goes on to say, in continuation of the previous extract :—

'If he subscribed not afterwards, yet he seemed to have given

some satisfaction to the bishop for his continuance in his place till the year 1589; when upon the dangerous sickness of Harewood the incumbent, divers of the parish petitioned the Lord Treasurer, that in case he died, Mr Smith their preacher might succeed him. And being departed this life, they renewed their petition, signed with the hands of divers of St Clement's and Lion's Inn, and the two churchwardens, the one a grocer, the other a locksmith, and a good number besides of ordinary tradesmen, as smiths, tailors, saddlers, hosiers, haberdashers, glaziers, cutlers, and such like, most of them setting their marks. The petition was somewhat rude, as were the men from whom it came; for it expressed, "That if there were any towards his Lordship, whom his honour affected, and was willing to prefer thereunto, they most humbly and instantly importuned his Lordship [notwithstanding to lay them aside, and] to prefer Mr Smith in this, and them some other way, as his Lordship had many. And in behalf of themselves they set forth, that [if this might be obtained] then Mr Smith's living should be ascertained [which was but precarious before], and they eased of his stipend [and so a charge taken from them], and their desires satisfied in enjoying him for their parson. In fine, giving this character of him, that his preaching, living, and sound doctrine had done more good among them, than any other that had gone before, or, which they doubted, could follow after." But notwithstanding, I scarce think these men, nor their reasons, were of strength to prevail with the Treasurer.'

It is probable that this disappointment, conjoined with failing health, led to Smith's retirement from the active work of the ministry. We suspect that at this time he retired into Leicestershire; and it does not appear that he ever held any ministerial charge.

VII. *Date of his death.* This is involved in very singular confusion. Bishop Tanner, in his *Bibliographia Britannica*, says that he flourished in 1613, and probably died about that time.

Mr Phillimore, in a note in his History of the Reign of George III., says that he certainly died before 1609.

Thomas Fuller, in his Church History, gives Smith's brother as his authority for stating that he died in 1600. In his life of Smith, published *after* his Church History, and which we are now annotating, he gives 1600 as the probable date of his death, but without referring to his brother as an authority.

Mr Nichols, in his History of Leicestershire, states that he was

alive at all events in 1597, because he published a volume of sermons in that year.

Wood says, 'that this person was in very great renown among men in 1593, in which year, if I mistake not, he died.'

In Piers Penniless's Supplication to the Devil, published in 1592, he is thus apostrophised: 'Silver-tongued Smith, whose well-tuned style hath made thy death the general tears of the muses!' He was therefore dead in 1592.

In 1591, a volume of his sermons was published, with the statement that they were perused by the author *before his death.*

Lastly, the same Mr Nichols, who states, as we have said, that he was alive in 1597, gives in the same volume an extract from the parish register of Husband's Bosworth, to the effect that he was buried there on the 4th July 1591!

Thus have we hunted this date back from 1613 to 1591, a period of twenty-two years. As therefore we have no reason to doubt the accuracy of Wood's statement of his age at the time of his matriculation, and as we have ascertained, beyond question, the date of his death, we conclude that he was born in 1560, and died in 1591, aged thirty-one years.

VIII. *His works.* The early editions of separate sermons were exceedingly numerous. Some of them were printed surreptitiously from shorthand notes, and he was obliged to publish them in self-defence. The copyright of these different publications being in different hands, it was of course difficult to get a collected edition of his works. This was accomplished in 1657, when Thomas Fuller stated in his preface, 'That this useful and desired volume of sermons, &c., have been for some years past in a manner smothered, to the regret of many, is not to be imputed as the fault of any one man, it being occasioned by the diversity of interests to the said copies of sermons, treatises, &c.' This edition of Fuller's is of a somewhat composite character. The main part of the volume was printed in 1657, by T. Mabb, for John Saywell. Then there are three sermons bearing date 1642, and printed by Francis Smethwick. Lastly, there is God's Arrow against Atheists, printed in 1656, for John Wright and George Sawbridge. This is an exceedingly neat volume. It was reprinted in 1575, but in inferior style, and with very numerous typographical errors. It is a copy of this edition

that our printers have had in their hands, but we have corrected an immense number of blunders by collation with older editions, the best in our possession, so far as it goes, being that of 1599. It is, however, incomplete, and our copy is imperfect.

It is not probable that any more English prose works of Henry Smith were ever published, than those that appear in this volume. As to his poetical works, we would submit the following notices. In Piers Penniless's Supplication to the Devil, there occurs the following passage:—

'Nor is poetry an art whereof there is no use in a man's whole life, but to describe discontented thoughts and youthful desires; for there is no study but it doth illustrate and beautify. How admirably shine those divines above the common mediocrity, that have tasted the sweet springs of Parnassus!

'*Encomium H. Smithi.*[1] Silver-tongued Smith, whose well tuned style hath made thy death the general tears of the muses, quaintly couldest thou devise heavenly ditties to Apollo's lute, and teach stately verse to trip it as smoothly as if Ovid and thee had but one soul. Hence-along did it proceed that thou wast such a plausible pulpit man. Before thou enteredst into the wonderful ways of theology, thou refinedst, preparedst, and purifiedst thy wings with sweet poetry. If a simple man's censure may be admitted to speak in such an open theatre of opinion, I never saw abundant reading mixed with delight, or sentences which no man can challenge of profane affectation, sounding more melodious to the ear, or piercing more deep to the heart.'

This extract clearly enough indicates that Smith wrote poetry, and makes it probable that some of his poetical effusions were published. Now, in Watt's Bibliotheca we have the title of a Latin

* Upon this marginal title Mr J. P. Collier has the following note:—'The marginal note shews that the Christian name of this poet began with *H*, *Encomium H. Smithi*. We have relics of several English versifiers of the name of Smith, but not one of them was H. Smith. The most noted of the Smiths was William, who wrote, *Chloris; or the Complaint of the Passionate Despised Shepherd*, 1596, 4to, which was dedicated to Spenser. He is not to be confounded with Wentworth Smith, who was himself confounded with Shakespeare on account of the identity of their initials.' A strange instance this of Homeric dormitation! Probably no man ever knew more of the literature of the Shakespearean era than Mr Payne Collier; yet when he wrote this note, he had altogether forgotten the existence of Henry Smith, although he must have met, a dozen or a score of times, with the epithet *Silver-tongued Smith* applied to him, and although the passage which he was annotating clearly shewed him to be a preacher.

poem, *Jurisprudentiæ, Medicinæ et Theologiæ Dialogus Dulcis;* and in Tanner's Bibliotheca we learn that this was published in an 8vo volume, London, 1592, by Bryan Cave, uncle of Henry Smith, and High Sheriff of Leicester.

Further, the works of Joshua Sylvester contain his translation of a Latin poem called *Micro-cosmo-graphia*, by Henry Smith, and also his translation of a few Latin epigrams. Whether the Latin originals of these were ever published, we have no information. These translations will be found in the present edition. Our readers will perhaps not regret deeply that they are not presented with a reprint of the 'pleasant dialogue.' It is probable, however, that his poetical compositions are very unfavourably represented by these versions of them by Sylvester.

In Watt's Bibliotheca, there also occurs *Vita Supplicium*, as the title of one of his compositions. That was probably another Latin poem.

In the letter to which we have so often referred, the Messrs Cooper, referring to that note of Mr Collier to which we have just adverted, remark, 'Mr Collier's note, p. 100 of his edition of Nash's *Pierce Penniless*, satisfies us that it is hopeless to expect that the English poetry of Henry Smith can now be recovered or identified.' Now, we agree that Mr Collier's ignorance of Henry Smith's name as an English poet is ground of a strong presumption that no English poems of his are extant; but we cannot see that there is any reason to believe that he ever wrote English poetry at all. All that Nash says of him as a poet is satisfied by the Latin poetry which he unquestionably wrote; and perhaps the unity of his soul with that of Ovid, is evinced by poetry written in Ovid's language, more than it would have been by poems composed in a tongue which Ovid never knew.

IX. *His influence as a preacher.* We suspect that Fuller's statement, as to the effect produced by Smith's sermon on the suckling of Isaac by Sarah, is somewhat apocryphal, or at least that it is inaccurate in its details. A higher authority on the subject than we can pretend to be, assures us, that the 'dear infants' would not greatly profit by being 'remanded' to their mothers' breasts after they had been separated from them from the time of their birth until the time when their mothers were occupying their own pews, that is, standing on their own feet, in church! But there is no doubt

that Smith's influence was very great; and it is creditable to the literary and spiritual tastes of Elizabethan London that he should have been so popular a preacher. In several places we have found it stated that his sermons became a 'family book.' Fuller, in the preface to his first edition, alludes to a good use that was made of his sermons and prayers. 'That these sermons have been used as a handmaid to prayer bedward in some families, is not unknown.' An abuse of this is referred to in the following epigram, contained in *Quarles's Divine Fancies*, and transferred into *Notes and Queries*, from which we copy it:—

*On Chamber Christians.*

No matter whether (some there be that say),
Or go to church, or stay at home, if pray;
Smith's dainty sermons have in plenty stored me
With better stuff than pulpits can afford me.
Tell me, why pray'st thou? Heaven commanded so.
Art not commanded to his temples too?
Small store of manners! when thy prince bids come,
And feast at court, to say, *I've meat at home!*

All who are acquainted with the sermons of Henry Smith acknowledge their singular excellence in respect both of matter and of manner. So free are they from the affectations that disfigure most of the pulpit productions of the time, that there is scarcely an expression that would require alteration in order to adapt them to the tastes of the present day. They probably do not contain a dozen words that would not be understood by an ordinary modern audience; there is scarcely a pun or a play upon words from the beginning to the end of them. As to their matter, we cannot say that they are equal in power of reasoning to those of Goodwin, or in solemn pathos to those of Brooks; but they contain a clear, forcible, and earnest statement of the gospel of the grace of God. We might easily fill many pages with testimonies to the merits of our author, borne by competent judges; but we prefer allowing the reader to form his own judgment.

X. *The present edition.* We have already stated that this edition contains all the prose works of Smith that there is any reason to suppose ever to have existed, and Sylvester's translation of one of his Latin poems and of several of his epigrams. The text is that of the edition of 1575, excepting when we suspected an error in that edition.

In almost every such case we have found a manifestly better reading in one or other of the earlier editions. In the few instances in which this has not been the case, we have suggested a different reading in the margin. A great proportion of the references to texts of Scripture are manifestly wrong in all the old editions. In most cases we have put them right. But in a few, where references to texts that have no existence (as Neh. xxiv. 40) are given in the margin, and where there does not seem to be in the text any allusion to any Scriptural passage that we know, we have cancelled the reference altogether. This is all the change that we have ventured to make, except on the authority of one or other of the old editions.

The quantity of matter being too great for one volume, and too little for two ordinary volumes of our series, has enabled us to present the works of Henry Smith in a form which can scarcely fail to be acceptable to the tasteful reader, and to accompany them with a full index, which we have prepared with great care. Upon the whole, we trust that this edition, as it is unquestionably the fullest, the most accurate, and the most elegant hitherto published, will be found to do fair justice to the author's fame.

T. S.

NOBILISSIMO VIRO

GULIELMO CECILIO

EQUITI AURATO,

BARONI BURGHLEIENSI,

SUMMO ANGLIÆ

THESAURARIO,

ET

CANTABRIGIENSIS ACADEMIÆ

CANCELLARIO,

HENRICUS SMITHUS

HÆC PIGNORA

IN GRATI ANIMI TESTIMONIUM

CONSECRAVIT.

# A PREPARATIVE TO MARRIAGE.

# TO THE READER.

BECAUSE sickness hath restrained me from preaching, I am content to do any good by writing. Happy is that author which is instead of others, that after his book is read, men need read no more of that matter. I go upon a theme which many have traversed before me prolixly, or cursorily, or barrenly; if I have performed by study any more than the rest, let my reader judge, and give glory to him which teacheth by whom he will. What I have endeavoured, myself do feel, and others know. We are ignorant of many things, for a few that we understand; but I have been always ashamed that my writings should weigh lighter for want of pains, which is the bane of printing, and surfeiteth the reader. Now, I send thee, like a bee, to gather honey out of flowers and weeds. Every garden is furnished with either, and so is ours. Read, pray, and meditate. Thy profit shall be little in any book, unless thou read alone, and unless thou read all, and record after, as the Bereans did the sermons of Paul. It is one of the births of my fainting, therefore take it with a right hand; and if thou find anything that doth make thee better, I repent not that others' importunity hath obtained it for thee. Farewell! As Jacob blessed his sons when he left them, so now I must leave my fruit to others. I pray God to bless it, that it may bring forth fruit in others, and be the savour of life to all that read it.

Thine in Christ,

H. S.

# A PREPARATIVE TO MARRIAGE.

YOU are come hither to be contracted in the Lord; that is, of two to be made one, Gen. ii. 18; for as God hath knit the bones and sinews together for the strengthening of men's bodies, so he hath knit man and woman together for the strengthening of their life, because 'two are firmer than one,' Eccles. iv. 9. And therefore, when God made the woman for man, he said, 'I will make him an help,' shewing that man is stronger by his wife. Every marriage, before it be knit, should be contracted, as it is shewed in Exod. xxii. 16, and Deut. xxii. 28: which stay between the contract and the marriage was the time of longing, for their affection to settle in, because the deferring of that which we love doth kindle the desire, which, if it came easily and speedily unto us, would make us set less by it. Therefore we read how Joseph and Mary were contracted before they were married, Mat. i. 18. In the contract[1] Christ was conceived, and in the marriage Christ was born, that he might honour both estates: virginity with his conception, and marriage with his birth. You are contracted, but to be married. Therefore I pass from contracts to speak of marriage, which is nothing else but a communion of life between man and woman joined together according to the ordinance of God.

First, I will shew the excellency of marriage; then the institution of it; then the causes of it; then the choice of it; then the duties of it; and lastly, the divorcement of it.

Well might Paul say, Heb. xiii. 4, 'marriage is honourable;' for God hath honoured it himself. It is honourable for the author, honourable for the time, and honourable for the place. Whereas all other ordinances were appointed of God by the hands of men, or the hands of angels, Acts xii. 7, Heb. ii. 2, marriage was ordained

[1] That is, between the contract and the marriage.

by God himself, which cannot err. No man nor angel brought the wife to the husband, but God himself, Gen. ii. 12; so marriage hath more honour of God in this than all other ordinances of God beside, because he solemnized it himself.

Then it is honourable for the time; for it was the first ordinance that God instituted, even the first thing which he did, after man and woman were created, and that in the state of innocency, before either had sinned: like the finest flower, which will not thrive but in a clean ground. Before man had any other calling, he was called to be an husband; therefore it hath the honour of antiquity above all other ordinances, because it was ordained first, and is the ancientest calling of men.

Then it is honourable for the place; for whereas all other ordinances were instituted out of paradise, marriage was instituted in paradise, in the happiest place, to signify how happy they are that marry in the Lord; they do not only marry one another, but Christ is married unto them; and so marriage hath the honour of the place above all other ordinances, because it was ordained in paradise.

As God the Father honoured marriage, so did God the Son, which is called 'the seed of the woman,' Gen. iii. 15; therefore marriage was so honoured among women because of this seed, that when Elizabeth brought forth a son, Luke i. 25, she said that 'God had taken away her rebuke,' counting it the honour of women to bear children, and, by consequence, the honour of women to be married; for the children which are born out of marriage are the dishonour of women, and called by the shameful name of bastards, Deut. xxiii. 2.

As Christ honoured marriage with his birth, so he honoured it with his miracles; for the first miracle which Christ did, he wrought at a marriage in Cana, where he turned the water into wine, John ii. 8. So, if Christ be at your marriage, that is, if you marry in Christ, your water shall be turned into wine; that is, your peace, and your rest, and your journey, and your happiness, shall begin with your marriage; but if you marry not in Christ, then your wine shall be turned into water: that is, you shall live worse hereafter than you did before.

As he honoured it with miracles, so he honoured it with praises; for he compareth the kingdom of God to a wedding, Mat. xxii. 2; and he compareth holiness to a wedding garment, ver. 11; and in the 5th of Canticles he is wedded himself, Cant. v. 9.

We read in Scripture of three marriages of Christ. The first was

when Christ and our nature met together. The second is, when Christ and our soul join together. The third is, the union of Christ and his church. These are Christ's three wives. As Christ honoured marriage, so do Christ's disciples; for John calleth the conjunction of Christ and the faithful a marriage, Rev. xix. 7. And in Rev. xxi. 9, the church hath the name of a bride, whereas heresy is called an harlot, Rev. xvii. 1. Further, for the honour of marriage, Paul sheweth how, by it, the curse of the woman was turned into a blessing; for the woman's curse was the pains which she should suffer in her travail, Gen. iii. 16. Now, by marriage this curse is turned into a blessing; for children are the first blessing in all the Scripture, Gen. i. 27. And therefore Christ saith, that so soon as the mother seeth a man child born into the world, she forgetteth all her sorrows, as though her curse were turned into a blessing, John xvi. 11.

And further, Paul saith, that by bearing of children, if she continue in faith and patience, she shall be saved, 1 Tim. ii. 15, as though one curse were turned into two blessings. For, first, she shall have children, and after, she shall have salvation. What a merciful God have we, whose curses are blessings! So he loved our parents when he punished them, that he could scarce punish them for love, and therefore a comfort was folded in his judgment.

To honour marriage more, it is said that God took a rib out of Adam's side, and thereof built the woman, Gen. ii. 22. He is not said to *make* man a wife, but to *build* him a wife, signifying that man and wife make as it were one house together, and that the building was not perfect until the woman was made as well as the man; therefore, if the building be not perfect now, it must be destroyed again.

Before God made the woman, it is said that he cast the man into a sleep, and in his sleep he took a rib out of his side, Gen. ii. 21; and as he made man of earth, so he made the woman of bone while Adam was asleep.

This doth teach us two things. As the first Adam was a figure of the second Adam, 1 Cor. xv. 22 and 45, so the first Adam's sleep was a figure of the second Adam's sleep, and the first Adam's spouse was a figure of the second Adam's spouse; that is, as in the sleep of Adam, Eve was born, so in the sleep of Christ the church was born, Ephes. v. 14. As a bone came out of the first Adam's side, so blood came out of the second Adam's side. As Adam's spouse received life in his sleep, so Christ's spouse received life in his sleep; that is, the death of Christ is the life of the church, for the apostle calleth death a sleep; but Christ which died is called

life, shewing that in his death we live. Secondly, this sleep which the man was cast into, while his wife was created, doth teach us, that our affections, our lusts, and our concupiscences, should sleep while we go about this action. As the man slept while his wife was making, so our flesh should sleep while our wife is choosing, lest, as the love of venison won Isaac to bless one for another, Gen. xxvii. 3, so the love of gentry, or riches, or beauty, make us to take one for another.

To honour marriage more yet, or rather to teach the married how to honour one another, it is said that the wife was made of the husband's rib, Gen. ii. 22; not of his head, for Paul calleth the husband the wife's head, Ephes. v. 23; not of the foot, for he must not set her at his foot. The servant is appointed to serve, and the wife to help. If she must not match with the head, nor stoop at the foot, where shall he set her then? He must set her at his heart, and therefore she which should lie in his bosom was made in his bosom, and should be as close to him as his rib, of which she was fashioned.

Lastly, in all nations the day of marriage was reputed the joyfullest day in all their life, and is reputed still of all; as though the sun of happiness began that day to shine upon us, when a good wife is brought unto us. Therefore one saith, that marriage doth signify merry-age, because a play-fellow is come to make our age merry, as Isaac and Rebekah sported together.

Solomon considering all these excellencies, as though we were more indebted unto God for this than other temporal gifts, saith, 'Houses and riches are the inheritance of the father, but a prudent wife cometh of the Lord,' Prov. xix. 14.

Houses and riches are given of God, and all things else, and yet he saith, houses and riches are given of parents, but a good wife is given of God, as though a good wife were such a gift as we should account comes from God alone, and accept it as if he should send us a present from heaven, with this name written on it, *the gift of God.*

Beasts are ordained for food, and clothes for warmth, and flowers for pleasure, but the wife is ordained for man; like little Zoar, a city of refuge to fly to in all his troubles, Gen. xix. 20; and there is no peace comparable unto her but the peace of conscience.

Now it must needs be, that marriage, which was ordained of such an excellent author, and in such a happy place, and of such an ancient time, and after such a notable order, must likewise have special causes for the ordinance of it. Therefore the Holy Ghost doth shew us three causes of this union.

One is, the propagation of children, signified in that when Moses saith, Gen. ii. 22, 'He created them male and female,' not both male nor both female, but one male and the other female; as if he created them fit to propagate other. And therefore when he had created them so, to shew that propagation of children is one end of marriage, he said unto them, 'Increase and multiply,' Gen. i. 28; that is, bring forth children, as other creatures bring forth their kind.

For this cause marriage is called *matrimony*, which signifieth *motherage*, because it maketh them mothers which were virgins before, and is the seminary of the world, without which all things should be in vain, for want of men to use them; for God reserveth the great city to himself; and this suburbs he hath set out unto us, which are regents by sea and by land.

If children be such a chief end of marriage, then it seems that where there can be no hope of children, for age and other causes, there marriage is not so lawful, because it is maimed of one of his ends, and seems rather to be sought for wealth, or for lust, than for this blessing of children. It is not good grafting of an old head upon young shoulders, for they will never bear it willingly, but grudgingly. This is signified in Deut. xxiii. 1.

Twice the wife is called 'the wife of thy youth,' Prov. v. 18, Mal. ii. 15; as though, when men are old, the time of marrying were past. Therefore God makes such unequal matches so ridiculous everywhere, that they please none but the parties themselves.

The second cause is to avoid fornication. This Paul signifieth when he saith, 'For the avoiding of fornication, let every man have his own wife,' 1 Cor. vii. 8. He saith not for avoiding of adultery, but for avoiding of fornication, shewing that fornication is unlawful, too, which the papists make lawful, in maintaining their stews, as a stage for fornicators to play upon, and a sanctuary to defend them; like Absalom's tent, which was spread upon the top of the house, that all Israel might see how he defiled his father's concubines, 2 Sam. xvi. 22. For this cause Malachi saith that God did create but one woman for the man. He had power to create more, but to shew that he would have him to stick to one, therefore he created of one rib but one wife for one husband, Mal. ii. 15. And in the ark there were no more women than men, but four wives for four husbands, although it was otherwise in the beginning of the world, when many wives might seem necessary to multiply mankind.

If any might have a dispensation herein, it seems that kings might be privileged before any other, because of their succession to

the crown, if his wife should happen to be barren; and yet the king is forbidden to take many wives, in Deut. xvii. 17, as well as the minister, 1 Tim. iii. 2, shewing that the danger of the state doth not countervail the danger of fornication.

For this cause, we read of none but wicked Lamech before the flood, Gen. iv. 23, that had more wives than one, whom Jovinian calleth a monster, because he made two ribs of one. And another saith that the name of his second wife doth signify a shadow, because she was not a wife, but the shadow of a wife. For this cause the Scripture never biddeth man to love his wives, but to love his wife, and saith, 'They shall be two in one flesh,' Mat. ix. 5; not three, nor four, but only two. For this cause King Solomon calleth the whorish woman a strange woman, Prov. ii. 16, to shew that she should be a stranger unto us, and we should be strange to her. For this cause children which are born in marriage are called *liberi*, which signifieth free born; and they which are born out of marriage are called bastards, that is, base-born, like the mule, which is engendered of an ass and a mare. Therefore adulterers are likened to the devil, which sowed another man's ground, Mat. xiii. 22. Adulterers sow for a harvest, but they sow that which they dare not reap. Therefore children born in wedlock are counted God's blessing, Ps. cxxviii. 4, because they come by virtue of that blessing, 'Increase and multiply,' Gen. i. 28. But before Adam and Eve were married, God never said *Increase*, shewing that he did curse, and not bless such increase. Therefore we read not in all the Scripture of one bastard that came to any good but only Jephthah, Judges xi. 1; and to shew that no inheritance did belong to them in heaven,[1] they had no inheritance in earth, neither were counted of the congregation, as others were, Deut. xxiii. 2.

Now because marriage was appointed for a remedy against fornication, therefore the law of God inflicted a sorer punishment upon him which did commit uncleanness after marriage than upon him which was not married, because he sinned, although he had the remedy of sin, like a rich thief which stealeth and hath no need.

Now if marriage be a remedy against the sin of fornication, 1 Cor. vii. 2, then unless ministers may commit the sin of fornication, it seems that they may use the remedy as well as other; for as it is better for a man to marry than to burn, so it is better for all men to marry than to burn; and therefore Paul saith, 'Marriage is honourable amongst all men,' Heb. xiii. 4. And again, 'For the

[1] They might be saved, but they had the mark of the curse.

avoiding of fornication, let every man have his wife,' 1 Cor. vii. And as though he did foresee that some would except the minister in time to come, in the first Epistle of Timothy, the third chapter, and second verse, he speaketh more precisely of the minister's wife than of any other, saying, 'Let him be the husband of one wife.' And lest he should say that by one wife he meaneth one benefice, like the papists, he expoundeth himself in the fourth verse, and saith that he must be one that can rule his house well, and his children.

Sure God would not have these children to be bastards, and therefore it is like that he alloweth the minister a wife. Therefore Paul said well, that he had no commandment for virginity, 1 Cor. vii. 6; for virginity cannot be commanded, because it is a special gift, but not a special gift to ministers, and therefore they are not to be bound more than other. A peculiar gift may not be made a general rule, because none can use it but they which have it; and therefore, 1 Cor. vii. 17, he saith, 'As God hath distributed to every man, so let him walk.' That is, if he have not the gift of continency, he is bound to marry; and therefore Paul commandeth in the seventh verse, whether he be minister or other, 'If they cannot abstain, let them marry,' as though they tempted God if they married not.

The law was general: Gen. ii. 18, 'It is not good for a man to be alone,' exempting one order of men no more than another. And again, Christ, speaking of chastity, saith, Mat. xix. 11, 'All men cannot receive this thing.' Therefore, unless that we know that this order of men can receive this thing, Christ forbids to bind them more than other; and therefore as the priests were married that taught the law, so Christ chose apostles that were married to preach the gospel. Therefore the doctrine of papists is the doctrine of devils; for Paul calleth the forbidding of marriage the 'doctrine of devils,' 1 Tim. iv. 3, a fit title for all their books.

Lastly, if marriage be a remedy against sin, then marriage itself is no sin; for if marriage itself were a sin, we might not marry for any cause, because we must not do the least evil, that the greatest good may come of it, Rom. iii. 8; and if marriage be not a sin, then the duties of marriage are not sin; that is, the secret of marriage is not evil; and therefore Paul saith, not only 'marriage is honourable,' but 'the bed' is honourable, Heb. xiii. 4; that is, even the action of marriage is as lawful as marriage.

Besides, Paul saith, 1 Cor. vii. 8, 'Let the husband give unto the wife due benevolence.' Here is a commandment to yield this duty;

that which is commanded is lawful, and not to do it is a breach of the commandment. Therefore marriage was instituted before any sin was, to shew that there is no sin in it, if it be not abused; but because this is rare, therefore after women were delivered, God appointed them to be purified, Lev. xii. 4, 5, &c., shewing that some stain or other doth creep into this action, which had need to be repented; and therefore when they prayed, Paul would not have them come together, lest their prayers should be hindered, 1 Cor. vii. 5.

The third cause is to avoid the inconvenience of solitariness, signified in these words, 'It is not good for man to be alone;' as though he had said, This life would be miserable and irksome, and unpleasant to man, if the Lord had not given him a wife to company his troubles. If it be not good for man to be alone, then it is good for man to have a fellow; therefore as God created a pair of all other kinds, so he created a pair of this kind.

We say that one is none, because he cannot be fewer than one, he cannot be less than one, he cannot be weaker than one, and therefore the wise man saith, Eccles. iv. 10, 'Woe to him that is alone,' that is, he which is alone shall have woe. Thoughts, and cares, and fears will come to him because he hath none to comfort him, as thieves steal in when the house is empty; like a turtle which hath lost his mate; like one leg when the other is cut off; like one wing when the other is clipped; so had the man been, if the woman had not been joined to him; therefore for mutual society, God coupled two together, that the infinite troubles which lie upon us in the world might be eased with the comfort and help one of another, and that the poor in the world might have some comfort as well as the rich; for 'the poor man,' saith Solomon, 'is forsaken of his own brethren,' Prov. xix. 7; yet God hath provided one comfort for him, like Jonathan's armour-bearer, that shall never forsake him, 1 Sam. xiv. 7, that is, another self, which is the only commodity (as I may term it) wherein the poor do match the rich; without which some persons should have no helper, no comfort, no friend at all.

But as it is not good to be alone, so Solomon sheweth that 'it is better to be alone than to dwell with a froward wife,' Prov. xxi. 9, which is like a quotidian ague, to keep his patience in ure. Such furies do haunt some men, like Saul's spirit, 1 Sam. xvi. 14, as though the devil had put a sword into their hands to kill themselves; therefore choose whom thou mayest enjoy, or live alone still, and thou shalt not repent thee of thy bargain.

That thou mayest take and keep without repentance, now we will speak of the choice, which some call the way to good wives' dwelling, for these flowers grow not on every ground; therefore they say, that in wiving and thriving a man should take counsel of all the world, lest he light upon a curse while he seeks for a blessing. As Moses considered what spies he sent into Canaan, Deut. i. 23, so thou must regard whom thou sendest to spy out a wife for thee. Discretion is a wary spy, but fancy is a rash spy, and liketh whom she will mislike again.

In the Revelation, Antichrist is described by a woman; and in Zechariah, sin is called a woman, Zech. v. 7; which sheweth that women have many faults; therefore he which chooseth of them, had need have judgment, and make an anatomy of their hearts and minds, before he say, This shall be mine. For the wisest man saith, Eccles. viii. 30, 'I have found one man of a thousand, but a woman among them all have I not found.' Although this may be understood of his concubines, yet it implieth that generally there is a greater infirmity in women than in men, because he compareth them together, as though there were a dearth of good women over the world.

For help hereof, in 1 Cor. vii. 39, we are taught to marry in the Lord, then we must choose in the Lord too; therefore we must begin our marriage where Solomon began his wisdom, 1 Kings iii. 9, 'Give unto thy servant an understanding heart.' So, give unto thy servant an understanding wife. If Abraham's servant prayed unto the Lord to prosper his business, Gen. xxiv. 12, when he went about to choose a wife for another, how shouldst thou pray when thou goest about a wife for thyself, that thou mayest say after, 'My lot is fallen in a pleasant ground.' To direct thee to a right choice herein, the Holy Ghost gives the two rules in the choice of a wife, godliness and fitness; godliness, because our spouse must be like Christ's spouse, that is, graced with gifts and embroidered with virtues, as if we married holiness herself. For the marriage of a man and woman is resembled of the apostle to the marriage of Christ and the church, Eph. v. 29. Now the church is called holy, because she is holy. In the sixth of the Canticles she is called undefiled, Cant. vi. 8, because she is undefiled. In the 45th Psalm she is called fair within, Ps. xlv. 9, because her beauty is inward. So our spouse should be holy, undefiled, and fair within. As God respecteth the heart, 1 Sam. xvi. 7, so we must respect the heart, because that must love, and not the face. Covetousness hath ever been a suitor to the richest, and pride to the highest, and lightness

to the fairest; and for revenge hereof, his joy hath ever ended with his wife's youth, which took her beauty with it. The goods of the world are good, and the goods of the body are good, but the goods of the mind are better. As Paul commendeth faith, hope, and charity, but saith, 'the greatest of these is charity,' 1 Cor. xiii. 13, so may I commend beauty, and riches, and godliness; but the best of these is godliness, because it hath the things which it wants, and makes every state alike with her gift of contentation.

Secondly, The mate must be fit. It is not enough to be virtuous, but to be suitable; for divers women have many virtues, and yet do not fit to some men; and divers men have many virtues, and yet do not fit to some women; and therefore we see many times even the godly couples to jar when they are married, because there is some unfitness between them, which makes odds. What is odds, but the contrary to even? therefore make them even, saith one, and there will be no odds. From hence came the first use of the ring in weddings, to represent this evenness; for if it be straiter than the finger it will pinch, and if it be wider than the finger it will fall off, but if it be fit it neither pincheth nor slippeth;[1] so they which are alike, strive not; but they which are unlike, are fire and water. Therefore one observeth, that concord is nothing but likeness; and all that strife is for unfitness, as in things when they fit not together, and in persons when they suit not one another. How was God pleased when he had found a king[2] according to his own heart? 1 Sam. ii. 35. So shall that man be pleased that finds a wife according to his own heart; whether he be rich or poor, his peace shall afford him a cheerful life, and teach him to sing, 'In love is no lack.' Therefore a godly man in our time thanked the Lord that he had not only given him a godly wife, but a fit wife; for he had said, not that she was the wisest, nor the holiest, nor the humblest, nor the modestest wife in the world, but the fittest wife for him in the world, which every man should think when that knot is tied, or else so oft as he seeth a better, he will wish that his choice were to make again. As he did thank God for sending him a fit wife, so the unmarried should pray to God to send him a fit wife; for if they be not like, they will not like.

The fitness is commended by the Holy Ghost in two words: one is in the second of Genesis, ver. 18, and the other in 2 Cor. vi. 14. That in Genesis is *meet:* God saith, 'I will make man a help meet for him;' shewing, that a wife cannot help well unless she be meet,

[1] The ceremony is not approved, but the invention declared.
[2] Qu. 'priest'?—Ed.

Further, it sheweth that man is such an excellent creature, that no creature was like unto him, or meet for him, till the woman was made.

This meetness God sheweth again in the 22d verse, where Moses saith, that of the rib which was taken out of man, God *built* the woman; signifying, that as one part of the building doth meet and fit with another, so the wife should meet and fit with the husband, that as they are called couples, so they may be called pairs; that is, as a pair of gloves or a pair of hose are alike, so man and wife should be alike, because they are a pair of friends.

If thou be learned, choose one that loveth knowledge; if thou be martial, choose one that loveth prowess; if thou must live by thy labour, choose one that loveth husbandry; for unless her mind stand with thy vocation, thou shalt neither enjoy thy wife nor thy calling.

That other word, in 2 Cor. vi. 14, is *yoke;* there marriage is called a yoke. Paul saith, 'Be not unequally yoked.' If marriage be a yoke, then they which draw in it must be fit, like two oxen which draw the yoke together, or else all the burden will lie upon one. Therefore they are called yoke-fellows too, Philip. iv. 3, to shew that they which draw this yoke must be fellows. As he which soweth seed chooseth a fit ground, because they say it is good grafting upon a good stock; so he which will have godly and virtuous children, must choose a godly and virtuous wife; for like mother, saith Ezekiel, chap. xvi. 44, like daughter. Now, as the traveller hath marks in his way that he may proceed aright, so the suitor hath marks in his way that he may choose aright.

There be certain signs of this fitness and godliness, both in the man and in the woman. If thou wilt know a godly man, or a godly woman, thou must mark five things: the report, the looks, the speech, the apparel, and the companions, which are like the pulses, that shew whether we be well or ill. The report, because as the market goes, so, they say, the market-men will talk. A good man commonly hath a good name, Prov. x. 7, because a good name is one of the blessings which God promiseth to good men, Mark xiv 9; but a good name is not to be prized from the wicked; and therefore Christ saith, Luke vi. 26, 'Cursed are you when all men speak well of you'; that is, when evil men speak well of you; because this is a sign that you are of the world, for the world liketh and praiseth her own, John xv. 19. Yet as Christ saith, John viii. 46, 'Who can accuse me of sin?' so it should be said of us, not Who can accuse me of sin? but who can accuse me of this sin? or who can

accuse me of that sin? that is, Who can accuse me of swearing? who can accuse me of dissembling? who can accuse me of fornication? No man can say this of his thought, but every man should say it of the act, like Zacharias and Elizabeth, which are called unblameable before men, Luke i. 6, because none could accuse them of open sins.

The next sign is the look; for Solomon saith in Eccles. viii. 7, 'Wisdom is in the face of a man;' so godliness is in the face of a man, and so folly is in the face of a man, and so wickedness is in the face of a man. And therefore it is said in Isa. iii. 9, 'The trial of their countenance testifieth against them;' as though their looks could speak. And therefore we read of 'proud looks,' and 'angry looks,' and 'wanton looks,' because they bewray pride, and anger, and wantonness.

I have heard one say, that a modest man dwells at the sign of a modest countenance; and an honest woman dwelleth at the sign of an honest face, which is like the gate of the temple that was called Beautiful, Acts iii. 2; shewing that if the entry be so beautiful, within is great beauty. To shew how a modest countenance and womanly shamefacedness do commend a chaste wife, it is observed that the word *nuptiæ*, which signifieth the marriage of the woman, doth declare the manner of her marriage; for it importeth a covering, because the virgins which should be married, when they came to their husbands, for modesty and shamefacedness did cover their faces, as we read of Rebekah, Gen. xxiv. 65, which so soon as she saw Isaac, and knew that he should be her husband, she cast a veil before her face, shewing that modesty should be learned before marriage, which is the dowry that God addeth to her portion.

The third thing is her speech, or rather her silence, for the ornament of a woman is silence; and therefore the law was given to the man rather than to the woman, to shew that he should be the teacher and she the hearer. As the echo answereth but one, for many which are spoken to her, so a maid's answer should be in a word, for she which is full of talk is not likely to prove a quiet wife.

The eye and the speech are the mind's glasses, 'for out of the abundance of the heart,' saith Christ, 'the mouth speaketh,' Mat. xii. 34; as though by the speech we may know what aboundeth in the heart. And therefore he saith, 'By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned,' Mat. xiv. 37; that is, thou shalt be justified to be wise, or thou shalt be condemned to be foolish; thou shalt be justified to be sober, or thou shalt be

condemned to be rash ; thou shalt be justified to be humble, or thou shalt be condemned to be proud ; thou shalt be justified to be loving, or thou shalt be condemned to be envious. Therefore Solomon saith, Prov. xviii. 7, 'A fool's lips are a snare to his own soul.' Snares are made for others, but this snare catcheth a man's self, because it bewrayeth his folly, and causeth his trouble, and bringeth him into discredit. Contrariwise, 'The heart of the wise,' saith Solomon, Prov. xvi. 23, 'guideth his mouth wisely, and the words of his mouth have grace.' Now to shew that this should be one mark in the choice of thy wife, Solomon describing a right wife, saith, Prov. xxxi. 26, 'She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and the law of grace is in her tongue.' A wife that can speak this language, is better than she which hath all the tongues. But as the open vessels were counted unclean, Num. xix. 15, so account that the open mouth hath much uncleanness.

The fourth sign is the apparel ; for as the pride of the glutton is noted, in that he went in purple every day, Luke xvi. 19, so the humility of John is noted, Mark i. 6, in that he went in haircloth every day. A modest woman is known by her sober attire, as the prophet Elijah was known by his rough garment, 2 Kings i. 8. Look not for better within than thou seest without, for every one seemeth better than she is ; if the face be vanity, the heart is pride. He which biddeth thee abstain from the show of evil, 1 Thes. v. 22, would have thee abstain from those wives which have the shows of evil ; for it is hard to come in the fashion, and not to be in the abuse, and therefore Paul saith, Rom. xii. 2, 'Fashion not yourselves like unto this world,' as though the fashions of men did declare of what side they are.

The fifth sign is the company ; for birds of a feather will fly together, and fellows in sin will be fellows in league, even as young Rehoboam chose young companions, 1 Kings xii. 8. The tame beasts will not keep with the wild, nor the clean dwell with the leprous. If a man can be known by nothing else, then he may be known by his companions ; for like will to like, as Solomon saith, Prov. i. 11, 'Thieves call one another.' Therefore when David left iniquity, he said, Ps. vi. 8, 'Away from me, all ye that work iniquity ;' shewing, that a man never abandoneth evil until he abandon evil company, for no good is concluded in this parliament. Therefore choose such a companion of thy life as hath chosen company like thee before. For they which did choose such as loved profane companions before, in a while were drawn to be profane too, that their

wives might love them. All these properties are not spied at three or four comings, for hypocrisy is spun with a fine thread, and none are deceived so often as lovers. He which will know all his wife's qualities before he be married to her, must see her eating, and walking, and working, and playing, and talking, and laughing, and chiding, or else he shall have less with her than he looked for, or more than he wished for.

When these rules are warily observed, they may join together, and say, as Laban and Bethuel said, Gen. xxiv. 50, 'This cometh of the Lord, therefore we will not speak against it.' How happy are those, in whom faith, and love, and godliness are married together, before they marry themselves! For none of these martial, and cloudy, and whining marriages can say, that godliness was invited to their bridal, and therefore the blessings which are promised to godliness do fly from them.

Now in this choice are two questions: first, Whether children may marry without their parents' consent; secondly, Whether they may marry with papists or atheists, &c. Touching the first, God saith, Exod. xx., 'Honour thy father and thy mother.' Now wherein canst thou honour them more, than in this honourable action, to which they have preserved thee, and brought thee up, which concerneth the state of thy whole life? Again, in the first institution of marriage, when there was no father to give consent, then our heavenly Father gave his consent. God supplied the place of the father, and brought his daughter unto her husband, Gen. ii. 22, and ever since the father after the same manner hath offered his daughter unto the husband.

Beside, there is a law that, if any man deflower a virgin, he shall marry her; but if the father of the virgin do not like of the marriage, then he shall pay unto her the dowry of virgins, Exod. xxii.; that is, so much as her virginity is esteemed; so that the father might allow the marriage, or forbid it.

Again, there is a law, Num. xxx. 6, that if a free man or free woman make a vow, it must be kept. But if a virgin make a vow, it should not be kept unless the father approve it, because she is not free; therefore if she did vow to marry, yet the father hath power by this law to break it. Again, our Saviour saith, that in heaven 'there is no marrying, or giving to marriage;' shewing that in earth there should be a giving to marriage, as well as marrying. Therefore the law speaketh unto the father, saying, Deut. vii. 3, 'Thou shalt not take a wife for thy son of strangers;' therefore Paul speaketh to the father, 1 Cor. vii. 38, 'If thou give thy daughter to mar-

riage, thou dost well.' Therefore Job's children are counted part of Job's substance, Job i. 3 and 10; shewing, that as a man hath the disposition of his own substance, so he hath the disposition of his own children. Therefore, in Mat. xxii. 30, the wife is said to be bestowed in marriage; which signifieth, that some did give her beside herself. Therefore it is said, that Jacob served Laban, that Laban might give him his daughter to wife, Gen. xxix. 18. Therefore Saul saith to David, I will give thee mine eldest daughter to wife, 1 Sam. xviii. 17. Therefore it is said, that Judah took a wife to Er his son, Gen. xxxviii. 6. Therefore Shechem saith to his father, 'Get me this maid to wife,' Gen. xxxiv. 4. Therefore in the marriage of Isaac, we see Abraham's servant, in the place of Isaac, and Rebekah the maid, and her parents, sitting in parliament together, Gen. xxiv. 51–53. Therefore Samson, though he had found a maid to his liking, yet he would not take her to wife before he had told his parents, and craved their assent, Judges xiv. 2. It is a sweet wedding when the father and the mother bring a blessing to the feast; and a heavy union which is cursed the first day that it is knit.

The parents commit their children to tutors, but themselves are more than tutors. If children may not make other contracts without their good will, shall they contract marriage, which have nothing to maintain it after, unless they return to beg of them whom they scorned before?

Will you take your father's money, and will you not take his instruction? Marriage hath need of many counsellors, and dost thou count thy father too many, which is like the foreman of thy instructors? If you mark what kind of youths they be, which have such haste that they dare not stay for their parents' advice, they are such as hunt for nothing but beauty, and for punishment hereof they marry to beggary, and lose their father and mother for their wife; therefore, honour thy parents in this, as thou wouldst that thy children should honour thee.

The second question is answered of Paul, when he saith, 'Be not unequally yoked with infidels.' As we should not be yoked with infidels, so we should not be yoked with papists, and so we should not be yoked with atheists, for that also is to be unequally yoked, unless we be atheists too. As the Jews might not marry with the Canaanites, Gen. xxiv. 3; Exod. xxxiv. 16; Mal. ii. 11; Ezra ix. 12, so we may not marry with them which are like Canaanites; but as the sons of Jacob said unto Hamor, which would marry their sister, 'We may not give our sister to a man uncircumcised; but if you

will be circumcised like us, then we will marry with you,' Gen. xxxiv. 14, so parents should say to suitors, I may not give my daughter to a man unsanctified; but if you will be sanctified, then will I give my daughter unto you. Though heresy and irreligion be not a cause of divorce, as Paul teacheth, yet it is a cause of restraint; for we may not marry all with whom we may live, being married. If adultery may separate marriage, shall not idolatry hinder marriage, which is worse than it? Christ saith, Mat. xix. 6, Mark x. 9, 'Let no man separate whom God hath joined;' so I may say, Let no man join whom God doth separate. For if our father must be pleased with our marriage, much more should we please that Father which ordained marriage.

Shall I say, *Be my wife,* to whom I may not say, *Be my companion;* or, *Come to my bed,* to whom I may not say, *Come to my table,* Isa. lii. 11. How should my marriage speed well, when I marry one to whom I may not say, *God speed,* because she is none of God's friends? 2 John 10. If a man long for a bad wife, he were best go to hell a-wooing, that he may have choice. Is there no friend but the enemy? no tree but the forbidden tree? He marrieth with the devil which marrieth with the tempter; for tempter is his name, and to tempt is his nature, Mat. iv. 3. When a man may choose, he should choose the best; but this man chooseth the worst, like them which call good evil, and evil good.

He prayeth, not to be led into temptation, Luke xi. 4, and leadeth himself into temptation. Surely he doth not fear sin, which doth not shun occasions; and he is worthy to be snared, which maketh a trap for himself. When Solomon, the mirror of wisdom, the wonder of the world, the figure of our Lord, by idolatrous concubines is turned to an idolater, 1 Kings xi. 1, &c., let no man say, I shall not be secured;[1] but say, How shall I stand where such a cedar fell? .The wife must be meet, as God said, Gen. ii. 18. But how is she meet, if thou be a Christian and she a papist? We must marry in the Lord, as Paul saith, 1 Cor. vii. 39; but how do we marry in the Lord, when we marry the Lord's enemies? Our spouse must be like Christ's spouse; but Christ's spouse is neither harlot, nor heretic, nor atheist. If she be poor, the Lord reproveth not for that; if she be weak, the Lord reproveth not for that; if she be hard-favoured, the Lord reproveth not for that; all these wants may be dispensed with; but none giveth any dispensation for godliness but the devil, Gen. iii. 4. Therefore they which take that privilege, are like to them which seek to witches, and are guilty of pre-

[1] Qu. 'seduced,' or, 'I shall be secure'?—Ed.

ferring evil before good. This unequal marriage was the chief cause that brought the flood, Gen. vi. 2, and the first beginning of giants and monstrous births, shewing by their monstrous children what a monstrous thing it is for believers and unbelievers to match together.

In Mat. xxii., Christ sheweth, that before parties married, they were wont to put on fair and new garments, which were called wedding-garments; a warning unto all which put on wedding-garments, to put on truth and holiness too, which so precisely is resembled by that garment more than other. It is noted, Luke xiv., that of all them which were invited to the Lord's banquet, and came not, only he which had married a wife did not desire to be excused, but said stoutly, 'I cannot come,' shewing how this state doth occupy a man most, and draw him often from the service of God; and therefore we had not need to take the worst, for the best are cumbersome enough. In the book of Job it is to be observed, that his wife did tempt him to blaspheme God, Job ii. 9; and he did not open his mouth to 'curse the day of his birth,' Job iii. 1, till after he had been so tempted by her; shewing that wicked women are able to change the stedfast man more than all temptations beside. Sampson would take a Philistine to wife, Judges xiv., but he lost his honour, his strength, and his life by her, lest any should do the like.

But what a notable warning is that in 2 Chron. xxi. 6, where the Holy Ghost saith, 'Jehoram walked in the way of Ahab, for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife,' as though it were a miracle if he had been better than he was, because his wife was a temptation. Miserable is that man which is fettered with a woman that liketh not his religion; she will be nibbling at his prayers, and at his study, and at his meditations, till she have tired his devotion, and turned the edge of his soul, as David was tried of his malapert Michal: she mocked him for his zeal and liked herself in her folly, 2 Sam. vi. 16; many have fallen at this stone. Therefore, as Christ saith, Luke xvii. 32, 'Remember Lot's wife;' so when thou marriest, remember Jehoram's wife, and be not wedded to her which hath not the wedding-garment; but let unity go first, and let union follow after, and hope not to convert her, but fear that she will pervert thee, lest thou say after, like him which should come to the Lord's banquet, 'I have married a wife, and cannot come,' Luke xiv. 20.

Yet the chiefest point is behind, that is, our duties. The duties of marriage may be reduced to the duties of man and wife, one

toward another, and their duties towards their children, and their duty toward their servants. For themselves, saith one, they must think themselves like to birds: the one is the cock, and the other is the hen; the cock flieth abroad to bring in, and the dam sitteth upon the nest to keep all at home. So God hath made the man to travel abroad, and the woman to keep home; and so their nature, and their wit, and their strength are fitted accordingingly; for the man's pleasure is most abroad, and the woman's within.

In every state there is some one virtue which belongeth to that calling more than other; as justice unto magistrates, and knowledge unto preachers, and fortitude unto soldiers; so love is the marriage virtue which sings music to their whole life.

Wedlock is made of two loves, which I may call the first love and the after love. As every man is taught to love God before he be bid to love his neighbour, so they must love God before they can love one another.

To shew the love which should be between man and wife, marriage is called *conjugium*, which signifieth a knitting or joining together; shewing, that unless there be a joining of hearts, and a knitting of affections together, it is not marriage in deed, but in show and name, and they shall dwell in a house like two poisons in a stomach, and one shall ever be sick of another.

Therefore, first, that they may love, and keep love one with another, it is necessary that they both love God, and as their love increaseth toward him, so it shall increase each to other. But the man must take heed that his love towards his wife be not greater than his love toward God, as Adam's and Samson's were, Gen. iii. 6, Judges xvi. 17; for all unlawful love will turn to hatred, as the love of Amnon did toward Tamar, 2 Sam. xiii. 15, Mat. x. 36; and because Christ hath forbidden it, therefore he will cross it. This made Uriah so fearful lest the pleasure of his wife should withdraw his heart from God, that he would not go to his house so long as he had cause to mourn and pray, although he had a wife which feared God like himself; and that you may see it is no cheap dalliance for the husband to make the wife, or the wife to make the husband less zealous than they were, in Deut. xiii., the wife which did draw her husband from God is condemned to die. Therefore, good wives, when their husbands purpose any good, should encourage them, like Jacob's wife, which bid him do according to the word of God, Gen. xxxi. 16; and if they see them minded to do any evil, they should stay them, like the wife of Pilate, which

counselled her husband not to condemn Christ, Mat. xxvii. 19. For seeing holiness is called the wedding-garment, Mat xxii. 11, who shall wear this wedding-garment, if they wear it not which are wedded? When one holy hath found another, then the Holiest seemeth to make the marriage, and his angels come to the feast.

To pass over sleights, which seldom prosper unless they have some warrant, the best policy in marriage is to begin well; for as boards well joined at the first fit close ever after, but if they square[1] at the first they warp more and more, so they which are well joined are well married; but they which offend their love before it is settled, fade every day like a marigold, which closeth her flower as the sun goeth down, till they hate one another more than they loved at first.

To begin this concord well, it is necessary to learn one another's natures, and one another's affections, and one another's infirmities, because ye must be helpers, and ye cannot help unless you know the disease. All the jars almost which do trouble this band do rise of this, that one doth not hit the measure of the other's heart, apply themselves to either's nature, whereby it cometh to pass that neither can refrain when either is offended, but one sharpeneth another when they had need to be calmed. Therefore they must learn of Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 20, to fashion themselves one to another, if they would win one another; for if any jar do arise, one saith, in no wise divide beds for it, for then the sun goeth down upon their wrath, Eph. iv. 26, and the means of reconcilement is taken away. Give passions no time; for if some men's anger stand but a night, it turneth to malice, which is incurable.

The apostle saith that there will be offences in the church, 1 Cor. xi. 19; so sure there will be many offences in marriage; but, he saith, these are trials who have faith, these are but trials who are good husbands and who are good wives. His anger must be in such a mood as if he did chide with himself, and their strife as it were a sauce made of purpose to sharpen their love when it waxeth unpleasant; like Jonathan's arrows, which were not shot to hurt, but to give warning, 1 Sam. xx. 20. Knowing once a couple which were both choleric, and yet never fell out, I asked the man how they did order the matter that their infirmity did not make them discord? He answered me, When her fit is upon her, I yield to her, as Abraham did to Sarah; and when my fit is upon me, she yields to me; and so we never strive together, but asunder. Methought it was a good example to commend unto all married folks; for every one hath his frenzy, and loveth them that can bear his infirmity. Whom

[1] Qu. 'square not'?—Ed.

will a woman suffer if she will not suffer her husband? and whose defects will a man bear if he will not bear hers which beareth his?

Thus much of their duties in general; now to their several offices. The man may spell his duty out of his name, for he is called 'the head,' Eph. v. 23, to shew that as the eye, the tongue, and the ear are in the head to direct the whole body, so the man should be stored with wisdom, and understanding, and knowledge, and discretion, to direct his whole family; for it is not right that the worse should rule the better, but the better should rule the worse, as the Best rules all. The husband saith that his wife must obey him, because he is her better; therefore if he let her be better than himself, he seems to free her from her obedience, and binds himself to obey her.

His first duty is called hearting, that is, hearty affection. As they are hand-fasted, so they must be heart-fasted; for the eye, and the tongue, and the hand, will be her enemies, if the heart be not her friend. As Christ draweth all the commandments to love, so I may draw all their duties to love, which is the heart's gift to the bride at her marriage. First, he must choose his love, and then he must love his choice. This is the oil which maketh all things easy. In Solomon's Song, which is nothing else but a description of Christ the Bridegroom, and the church his spouse, one calleth the other *love*, to shew that though both do not honour alike, yet both should love alike, which the man may do without subjection.

The man is to his wife in the place of Christ to his church; therefore the apostle requireth such an affection of him towards his spouse as Christ beareth towards his spouse; for he saith, 'Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved his congregation,' Eph. v. 25; that is, with a holy love, and with a hearty love, and with a constant love, as the church would be loved of Christ. Will not a man love his glory? Why, Paul calleth the woman 'the glory of the man,' 1 Cor. xi. 7; for her reverence makes him to be reverenced, and her praise makes him to be praised. Therefore, he which loveth not his wife, loveth his shame, because she is his glory, Eph. v. 28. Paul saith, 'He which loveth his wife, loveth himself;' for thereby he enjoyeth peace, and comfort, and help to himself in all his affairs; therefore in the same verse Paul counselleth husbands to love their wives as their bodies. And after, in verse 33, as though it were too little to love them as their bodies, he saith, 'Let every man love his wife as himself,' that is, as his body and soul too; for if God commanded men to love their neighbours as themselves, Lev. xix. 18, much more are they bound to love their wives as themselves, which are their next neighbours. As Elkanah did not love his wife less for her

barrenness, but saith, 'Am not I better unto thee than ten sons?' 1 Sam. i. 7, as though he favoured her more for that which she thought herself despised, so a good husband will not take occasion to love his wife less for her infirmities, but comfort her more for them, as this man did, that she may bear with his infirmities too.

When Christ saith, Mark x. 7, that 'a man should leave father and mother and cleave to his wife,' he signifieth how Christ left his Father for his spouse; and that man doth not love his wife so much as he should, until he affect her more than ever he did his father or mother. Therefore, when God bid Abraham forsake all his kindred, Gen. xii. 1, yet he bid him not forsake his wife; as though the other sometime might be forsaken for God, but the wife must be kept for God, like a charge which bindeth for term of life.

His next duty to love, is a fruit of his love; that is, to let all things be common between them, which were private before. The man and wife are partners, like two oars in a boat; therefore he must divide offices, and affairs, and goods with her, causing her to be feared, and reverenced, and obeyed of her children and servants, like himself, for she is an under officer in his commonweal, and therefore she must be assisted and borne out like his deputy; as the prince standeth with his magistrates for his own quiet, because they are the legs which bear him up. To shew this community between husband and wife, he is to maintain her as he doth himself, because Christ saith, Mark x. 8, 'They are no more two, but one.' Therefore, when he maintaineth her, he must think it but one charge, because he maintaineth no more but himself, for they two are one. He may not say, as husbands are wont to say, that which is thine is mine, and that which is mine is mine own; but that which is mine is thine, and myself too. For as it is said, Rom. viii. 32, 'He which hath given us his Son, can he deny us anything?' So she may say, He which hath given me himself, can he deny me anything? The body is better than the goods; therefore if the body be mine, the goods are mine too.

Lastly, he must tender her as much as all her friends, because he hath taken her from her friends, and covenanted to tender her for them all. To shew how he should tender her, Peter saith, 'Honour the woman as the weaker vessel,' 1 Peter iii. 7. As we do not handle glasses like pots, because they are weaker vessels, but touch them nicely and softly for fear of cracks, so a man must entreat his wife with gentleness and softness, not expecting that wisdom, nor that faith, nor that patience, nor that strength in the weaker vessel, which should be in the stronger; but think when he takes a wife

he takes a vineyard, not grapes, but a vineyard to bear him grapes; therefore he must sow it, and dress it, and water it, and fence it, and think it a good vineyard, if at last it bring forth grapes. So he must not look to find a wife without a fault, but think that she is committed to him to reclaim her from her faults; for all are defective. And if he find the proverb true, that in space cometh grace, he must rejoice as much at his wife when she amendeth, as the husbandman rejoiceth when his vineyard beginneth to fructify.

This is far from civil war between man and wife; in all his offices is found no office to fight. If he cannot reform his wife without beating, he is worthy to be beaten for choosing no better; when he hath used all means that he may, and yet she is like herself, he must take her for his cross, and say with Jeremiah, 'This is my cross, and I will bear it.' But if he strike her, he takes away his hand from her, which was the first part he gave her to join them together; and she may put her complaint against him, that he hath taken away part of her goods. Her cheeks are made for thy lips, and not for thy fists.

The very name of a wife is like the angel which stayed Abraham's hand when the stroke was coming, Gen. xxii. 11. If David, because he could not express the good and comfort of unity, was fain to say, Ps. cxxxiii. 1, 'O how good and joyful a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!' then weigh and judge how harsh and bitter a thing it is for man and wife to dwell together at enmity. For the first year after marriage, God would not have the husband to go to war with his enemies, Deut. xxiv. 5; but no year would he have him war with his wife; and therefore God gave him that year to stay at home and settle his love, that he might not war, nor jar after; for the God of peace dwelleth not in the house of war. As a kingdom cannot stand to be divided, Mat. xii. 26, so a house cannot stand if it be divided; for strife is like fire, which leaves nothing but dust, and smoke, and ashes behind it. We read in Scripture of masters that struck their servants, but never of any that struck his wife, but rebuked her. Lot was drunk when he lay with his daughters instead of his wife, Gen. xix. 33; and so is he which striketh his wife instead of his servant. The law sheweth how a bondman should be corrected, but the wife is like a judge, which is joined in commission with her husband to correct others. Wilt thou strike one in his own house? no more shouldst thou strike thy wife in her house. She is come to thee as to a sanctuary, to defend her from hurt, and canst thou hurt her thyself? Therefore Abraham was called Sarah's veil, Gen. xx. 16, because he should

shield her; for a veil is made to save. Abraham said to Lot, 'Are we not brethren?' Gen. xiii. 8, that is, may brethren jar? But they may say, Are we not one? Can one chide with another? Can one fight with another? He is a bad host that welcomes his guest with stripes. Doth a king trample his crown? Solomon calleth the wife, 'the crown of her husband,' Prov. xii. 4; therefore he which woundeth her, woundeth his own honour. She is a free citizen in thine own house, and hath taken the peace of thee the first day of her marriage, to hold thy hand till she release thee again. Adam says of his spouse, Gen. ii. 23, 'This is flesh of my flesh;' but 'no man,' saith Paul, Eph. v. 29, 'ever hated his own flesh.' So then, if a man ask whether he may strike his wife, God saith, nay, thou mayest not hate thy wife, for no man hateth his own flesh; shewing that he should not come near blows, but think his wrath too much; for Paul saith, Col. iii. 19, 'Be not bitter to your wives,' noting, that anger in a husband is a vice.

Doth the cock spur the hen? Every man is ashamed to lay his hands on a woman, because she cannot match him; therefore he is a shameless man which layeth hands on his wife. The hand doth not buffet its own cheek, but stroke it. If a man be seen raging with himself, he is carried to bedlam; so these madmen which beat themselves should be sent to bedlam till their madness be gone. Solomon saith, Prov. v. 19, 'Delight continually in her love,' that is, begin, proceed, and end in love. In revenge, therefore, he sheweth that delight is gone, because he calleth love their delight. Therefore, as Paul saith of bishops, 1 Tim. iii. 3, 'A bishop must be no striker,' so a husband must be no striker; for he which striketh his own flesh breaketh that law which saith, 'Thou shalt not make a scar in thy flesh,' Lev. xix. 28, Deut. xiv. 1,[1] and is like the Baalites which wounded their own bodies, 1 Kings xviii. 28. Thus we have sent letters unto husbands to read before they fight. Now let us go home to love again. Wouldst thou learn how to make thy match delightful? Solomon saith, 'rejoice in her love continually,' Prov. v. 19. As though thou couldst not delight without love, and with love thou mayest delight continually, therefore love is called the thankful virtue, because it rendereth peace, and ease, and comfort to them that make use of her. So much for husbands.

Likewise the woman may learn her duty of her names. They are called *goodwives*, as goodwife A and goodwife B. Every wife is called a good wife; therefore if they be not good wives, their

[1] It is properly meant in mourning for the dead, but it doth imply an unlawfulness to hurt ourselves.

names do belie them, and they are not worth their titles, but answer to a wrong name, as players do upon a stage. This name pleaseth them well. But besides this, a wife is called a yoke-fellow, Philip. iv. 3, to shew that she should help her husband to bear his yoke, that is, his grief must be her grief; and whether it be the yoke of poverty, or the yoke of envy, or the yoke of sickness, or the yoke of imprisonment, she must submit her neck to bear it patiently with him, or else she is not his yoke-fellow, but his yoke; as though she were inflicted upon him for a penalty, like to Job's wife, whom the devil left to torment him when he took away all he had beside, Job ii. 9. The apostle biddeth to 'rejoice with them that rejoice, and mourn with them that mourn,' Rom. xii. 15. With whom should the wife rejoice rather than with her husband? or with whom should she mourn rather than with her own flesh? 'I will not leave thee,' saith Elisha to Elijah, 2 Kings ii. 6; so she should never leave him till death. 'Bear one another's burden,' saith Paul, Gal. vi. 2. Who shall bear one another's burden, if the wife do not bear the husband's burden? Wicked Jezebel comforted her husband in his sickness, 1 Kings xxi. 5; and Jeroboam's wife sought for his health, though she were as bad as he, 1 Kings xiv. 4. God did not bid Sarah leave her father and her country, as he bade her husband, Gen. xii. 1; yet because he bid Abraham leave his, she left hers too, shewing that she was content not only to be his play-fellow, but his yoke-fellow too.

Beside a yoke-fellow, she is called a helper, Gen. ii. 18, to help him in his business, to help him in his labours, to help him in his troubles, to help him in his sickness, like a woman-physician, sometime with her strength, and sometime with her counsel; for sometime as God confoundeth the wise by the foolish, and the strong by the weak, 1 Cor. i. 27, so he teacheth the wise by the foolish, and helpeth the strong by the weak. Therefore Peter saith, 'Husbands are won by the conversation of their wives,' 1 Pet. iii. 1; as if he should say, sometime the weaker vessel is the stronger vessel. And Abraham may take counsel of Sarah, Gen. xvi. 2, as Naaman was advised by his servant, 2 Kings v. 8. The Shunamite's counsel made her husband receive a prophet into his house, 2 Kings iv. 10; and Esther's counsel made her husband spare the church, Esth. vii. 3; so some have been better helpers to their husbands than their husbands have been to them; for it pleased God to provoke the wise with the foolish, as he did the Jews with the Gentiles.

Beside a helper, she is called a comforter too; and therefore the man is bid rejoice in his wife, Prov. v. 18; which is as much to say, that

wives must be the rejoicing of their husbands, even like David's harp to comfort Saul, 1 Sam. xvi. 23. Therefore it is said of Rebekah, that she prepared meat for her husband, such as he loved, Gen. xxvii.; so a good wife is known, when her words, her deeds, and countenance are such as her husband loveth. She must not examine whether he be wise or simple, but that she is his wife; and therefore they which are bound must obey: as Abigail loved her husband, though he were a fool, 1 Sam. xxv. 3; for the wife is as much despised for taking rule over her husband, as he for yielding it unto her. Therefore one saith, that a mankind-woman is a monster, that is, half a woman, and half a man. It becomes not the mistress to be master, no more than it beseemeth the master to be mistress, but both to sail with their own wind.

Lastly, We call the wife *huswife*, that is, house-wife; not a street-wife, like Tamar, Gen. xxxviii. 14; nor a field-wife, like Dinah, Gen. xxxiv. 2; but a housewife, to shew that a good wife keeps her house; and therefore Paul biddeth Titus to exhort women that they be 'chaste, and keeping at home,' Titus ii. 5. Presently after *chaste* he saith *keeping at home*, as though home were chastity's keeper. And therefore Solomon, depainting the whore, Prov. vii. 12, setteth her at the door, now sitting upon her stalls, now walking in the streets, now looking out at the windows, like cursed Jezebel, 2 Kings ix. 30, as if she held forth the glass of temptation for vanity to gaze upon. But chastity careth to please but one, and therefore she keeps her closet, as if she were still at prayer. The angel asked Abraham, 'Where is thy wife?' Abraham answered, 'She is in the tent,' Gen. xviii. 9. The angel knew where she was, but yet he asked, that he might see how women in old time did keep their tents and houses. It is recorded of the Shunamite, 2 Kings iv. 22, that she did ask her husband leave to go unto the prophet. Though she went to a prophet, and went of a good errand, and for his cause as much as her own, yet she thought it not meet to go far abroad without her husband's leave. Phidias, when he should paint a woman, painted her sitting under a snail's shell; signifying that she should go like a snail, which carrieth his house upon his back. Solomon bade Shimei 'go not beyond the river,' 1 Kings ii. 36, 37; so a wife should teach her feet go not beyond the door. She must count the walls of her house like the bounds of the river which Shimei might not pass if he would please the king. For when Adam was away, Eve was made a prey. If her husband be from her, until he return again she must think herself a widow, that is, separated from man; for *vidua* doth signify *a viro*

*divisa*, that is, *widow* doth signify *divided from man;* therefore now she must have no fellowship nor company with men, because she is divided from man. As it becometh her to keep home, so it becometh her to keep silence, and always speak the best of her head. Others seek their honour in triumph, but she must seek her honour in reverence; for it becometh not any woman to set light by her husband, nor to publish his infirmities. For they say, That is an evil bird that defileth her own nest; and if a wife use her husband so, how may the husband use his wife? Because this is the quality of that sex, to overthwart, and upbraid, and sue the preeminence of their husbands, therefore the philosophers could not tell how to define a wife, but called her the contrary to a husband, as though nothing were so cross and contrary to a man as a wife. This is not Scripture, but no slander to many.

As David exalted the love of women above all other loves, 2 Sam. i. 26, so Solomon mounteth the envy of women above all other envies, Prov. xxi. 19. Stubborn, sullen, taunting, gainsaying, outfacing, with such a bitter humour, that one would think they were molten out of the salt pillar into which Lot's wife was transformed, Gen. xix. 26. We say not all are alike, but this sect hath many disciples. Doth the rib that is in man's side fret or gall him? No more then should she which is made of the rib, Gen. ii. 20. Though a woman be wise, and painful, and have many good parts, yet if she be a shrew, her troublesome jarring in the end will make her honest behaviour unpleasant, as her overpinching at last causeth her good housewifery to be evil spoken of. Therefore although she be a wife, yet sometimes she must observe the servant's lesson, Titus ii. 9, 'Not answering again,' and hold her peace to keep the peace. Therefore they which keep silence are well said to hold their peace, because silence oftentimes doth keep the peace when words would break it.

To her silence and patience she must add the acceptable obedience which makes a woman rule while she is ruled. This is the wife's tribute to her husband; for she is not called his head, but he is called her head. Great cause hath man to make much of his wife, for great and many are her duties to him; for Paul saith, 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands, as to the Lord,' Eph. v. 23, shewing that she should regard his will as the Lord's will; but withal, as the Lord commandeth only that which is good and right, so she should obey her husband in good and right, or else she doth not obey him as the Lord, but as the tempter. The first subjection of woman began at sin; for when God cursed her for seducing her

husband, when the serpent had seduced her, he said, 'He shall have authority over thee,' Gen. iii. 16. And therefore as the man named all other creatures, in sign that they should be subject to him, Gen. ii. 20, as a servant which cometh when his master calleth him by his name, so did he name the woman also, in token that she should be subject to him likewise, ver. 23; and therefore Ahasuerus made a law, Esth. i. 20, 22, that every man should bear rule in his own house, and not the woman. Because she sinned first, therefore she is humbled most; and ever since the daughters of Sarah are bound to call their husbands lords, as Sarah called her husband, Gen. xix. 12, 1 Peter iii. 3, 6; that is, to take them for lords, for heads and governors. If ye disdain to follow Abraham's spouse, the apostle biddeth you follow Christ's spouse; for he saith, Eph. v. 24, 'Let a wife be subject to her husband, as the church is to Christ.' 'A greater love than this,' saith Christ, 'no man can have,' John xv. 13; so a better example than this no woman can have. That the wife may yield this reverence to her husband, Paul would have her attire to be modest and orderly, 1 Tim. ii. 9; for garish apparel hath taught many gossips to disdain their husbands. This is the folly of some men, to lay all their pride upon their wives; they care not how they sloven themselves, so their wives jet like peacocks. But Peter doth commend Sarah for her attire, and not Abraham, 1 Peter iii. 5, shewing that women should brave it no more than men; and God made Eve's coat of the same cloth that he made Adam's, Gen. iii. 21. They covered themselves with leaves, and God derided them, Gen. iii. 7; but now they cover themselves with pride, like Satan which is fallen down before them like lightning, Luke x. 18. Ruff upon ruff, lace upon lace, cut upon cut, four-and-twenty orders, until the woman be not so precious as her apparel; that if any man would picture vanity, he must take a pattern of a woman, or else he cannot draw her likeness. As Herodias was worse for her fine dancing, Mat. xiv. 6, so a woman may have too many ornaments. Frizzled locks, naked breasts, painting, perfume, and especially a rolling eye, are the forerunners of adultery; and he which hath such a wife, hath a fine plague. Once women were married without dowries, because they were well nurtured; but now, if they weighed not more in gold than in godliness, many should sit like nuns without husbands. Thus we have shadowed the man's duty to his wife, and the woman's to her husband.

After their duties one to another, they must learn their duties to their family. One compareth the master of the house to the seraphin, which came and kindled the prophet's zeal; so he should go

from wife to servants, and from servants to children, and kindle in them the zeal of God, longing to teach his knowledge, as a nurse to empty her breasts. Another saith that a master in his family hath all the offices of Christ, for he must rule, and teach, and pray; rule like a king, and teach like a prophet, and pray like a priest, Rev. v. 10 To shew how a godly man should behave himself in his household when the Holy Ghost speaketh of the conversation[1] of any housekeeper, lightly he saith, that 'the man believed with all his household,' Acts xvi. 34, xviii. 8. As Peter being converted, must convert his brethren; so the master being converted, must convert his servants. For therefore God said, that he would not hide his counsel from Abraham, because he would teach his family; and surely all duty which is not done of conscience, is but eye-service, and faileth at most need, as Ziba betrayed his master when he should have defended him. Therefore before Onesimus was converted, Paul said, he was an unprofitable servant, Philem. 11, but when he was converted, he calleth him more than a servant, because such a servant is better than many servants. Therefore though Laban was wicked himself, yet he rejoiceth that Jacob his servant was godly, because God blessed him the better for him, Gen. xxx. 27. Joshua saith, 'I and my household will serve the Lord,' Joshua xxiv. 15, shewing that masters should receive none into their houses but whom they can govern, as Joshua did; and if any have crept into their doors, then they must put them forth again; for David saith, 'I will not suffer a liar to stay in my house,' Ps. ci. 7. He saith not a swearer, nor a thief, but a liar; as if he should say, I will rid him out of my doors before he be a swearer, and a thief; for a liar will grow to a swearer and a thief in a day, as a dicer groweth to a beggar in a night; therefore it is noted of Cornelius, Acts x. 2, that all his household served God as himself did. This is also reported of Joseph and Mary for an example, Luke ii. 41, that they went up every year with all their family to worship at Jerusalem, that their children and their servants might learn to know God as well as they. These examples be written for householders, as others are for magistrates, and ministers, and soldiers, that no calling might seek farther than the Scripture for instruction. Wherefore as you are masters now, and they your servants, instruct them and train them as if you would shew what masters they should be hereafter. After the care of their souls, they must care for their bodies; for if the 'labourer is worthy of his hire,' Luke x. 7, which laboureth but a day, what is the servant worthy of, which labours

[1] Qu. 'conversion'?—Ed.

every day? Therefore Paul is so earnest with Philemon to make much of Onesimus his servant, that he desired Philemon to receive him as he would himself, Philem. 17. Therefore, because cruel and greedy masters should not use them too hardly, God remembered them in his creation, and made every week one day of rest, wherein they should be as free as their masters, Gen. ii. 2; so God pitieth the labourer from heaven, and every Sabbath looks down upon him from heaven, as if he should say, One day thy labours shall have an end, and thou shalt rest for ever, as thou restedst this day.

By this we see, as David did limit Joab, that he should not kill Absalom, 2 Sam. xviii. 5, so God hath bound masters, that they should not oppress their servants. Shall God respect thine more than thou? Art thou made fresher to thy labour by a little rest? And is not thy servant made stronger by rest to labour for thee? How many beasts and sheep did Laban lose, only for hardly entreating of a good servant, Gen. xxxi. 9; therefore that is the way to lose, but not to thrive. He which counteth his servant a slave is in an error, for there is difference between believing servants and infidel servants; the infidels were made slaves to the Jews, because God hated them, and would humble them; but their brethren did serve them like helpers, which should be trained by them. It is not a base nor vile thing to be called a servant, for our Lord is called a servant, Isa. xlii. 1, Mat. xii. 18, which teacheth Christians to use their servants well for Christ's sake, seeing they are servants too, and have one master, Christ. As David speaketh of man, Ps. viii. 6, saying, 'thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,' so I may say of servants, that God hath made them a little lower than children; not children, but the next to children, as one would say, inferior children, or sons in law. And therefore the householder is called *pater familias*, which signifieth the father of his family, because he should have a fatherly care over his servants, as if they were his children, and not use them only for their labour, like beasts.

Besides, the name of a servant doth not signify *suffering*, but *doing*; therefore masters must not exercise their hands upon them, but set their hands to work; and yet as God layeth no more upon his servants than he makes them able to bear, 1 Cor. x. 13, so men should lay no more upon their servants than they are able to bear. For a good man, saith Solomon, will be merciful to his beast, Prov. xii. 10, and therefore he will be merciful to his brother.

That man is not worthy to be served, which cannot afford that his servants should serve God as well as himself. Give unto God that

which is God's, and then thou mayest take that which is thine. 'He that careth not for his family,' saith Paul, 'is worse than an infidel,' 1 Tim. v. 8, because infidels care for their families. But as Agur prayeth, Prov. xxx. 8, 'Give me not too much, nor too little, but feed me with food convenient;' so their care should not be too much nor too little, but convenient, or else they are worse than infidels too, because covetousness is called idolatry, which is worse than infidelity, Col. iii. 5; for it is less rebellion not to honour the king, than to set up another king against him, as the idolaters do against the King of heaven.

Next unto servants' instructions and labours must be considered their corrections. As Paul saith, Eph. vi. 4, 'Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath,' so may I say, Masters, provoke not your servants to wrath; that is, use such reproofs and such corrections that you do not provoke them, but move them; that you do not exasperate them, but win them: for reviling words and unseasonable fierceness doth more hurt than good. And therefore the law of God did charge the master that he should not inflict above forty stripes upon his servant, lest he should seem despised in his eyes. For while a child, or scholar, or servant, doth think that he is reproved for love, or beaten with reason, it makes him think of his faults, and he is ashamed; but when he sees that he is rebuked with curses, and beaten with staves, as though he were hated like a dog, his heart is hardened against the man which correcteth him, and the fault for the which he is corrected; and after he becometh desperate, like a horse which turneth upon the striker; and therefore think that God even then chides you, whensoever you chide in such rage. For though there be a fault, yet some things must be winked at, and some things must be forgiven, and some punished with a look; for he which takes the forfeit of every offence, shall never be in any rest, but vex himself more than his servant.

Further, I have heard experience say, that in these punishments it is most meet and acceptable to the offender that the man should correct his men, and the women her maids; for a man's nature scorneth to be beaten of a woman, and a maid's nature is corrupted with the stripes of a man. Therefore we read that Abraham would not meddle with his maid, but committed her to his wife, and said, 'Do with her as it pleaseth thee,' Gen. xvi. 6; as if he should say, It belongeth not to me, but to thee.

Lastly, We put the duty towards children, because they come last to their hands. In Latin, children are called *pignora*, that is, *pledges;* as if I should say, A pledge of the husband's love to the

wife, and a pledge of the wife's love toward the husband; for there is nothing which doth so knit love between the man and the wife as the fruit of the womb. Therefore, when Leah began to conceive, she said, 'Now my husband will love me,' Gen. xxx. 20; as though the husband did love for children. If a woman have many defects (as Leah had), yet this is the amends which she makes her husband, to bring him children, which is the right wedding-ring, that sealeth and maketh up the marriage. When their father and mother fall out, they perk up between them like little mediators, and with many pretty sports make truce, when others dare not speak to them. Therefore, now let us consider what these little ones may challenge of their parents, that stand them instead of lawyers. Before we teach parents to love their children, they had need be taught not to love them too much, for David's darling was David's traitor; and this is the manner of God, when a man begins to set anything in God's room, and love it above him which gave it, either to take away it, or to take away him, before he provoke him too much. Therefore, if parents would have their children live, they must take heed not to love them too much; for the giver is offended when the gift is more esteemed than he.

The first duty is the mother's, that is, to nurse her child at her own breasts, as Sarah did Isaac, Gen. xxi. 7; and therefore Isaiah joineth the nurse's name and the mother's name both in one, and calleth them 'nursing mothers;' shewing that mothers should be the nurses. So when God chose a nurse for Moses, Exodus ii. 8, he led the handmaid of Pharaoh's daughter to his mother, as though God would have none nurse him but his mother. After, when the Son of God was born, his Father thought none fit to be his nurse but the virgin his mother, Mat. ii. 14. The earth's fountains are made to give water, and the breasts of women are made to give suck. Every beast and every fowl is bred of the same that did bear it, only women love to be mothers, but not nurses. Therefore, if their children prove unnatural, they may say, Thou followest thy mother, for she was unnatural first, in locking up her breasts from thee, and committing thee forth like a cuckoo, to be hatched in a sparrow's nest. Hereof it comes that we say, 'He sucked evil from the dug;' that is, as the nurse is affected in her body or in her mind, commonly the child draweth the like infirmity from her, as the eggs of a hen are altered under the hawk. Yet they which have no milk, can give no milk. But whose breasts have this perpetual drought? Forsooth, it is like the gout; no beggars may have it, but citizens or gentlewomen. In the ninth chapter of

Hosea, dry breasts are named for a curse; what lamentable hap have gentlewomen to light upon this curse more than other? Sure if their breasts be dry, as they say, they should fast and pray together, that this curse might be removed from them.

The next duty is, 'Catechise a child in his youth, and he will remember it when he is old,' Prov. xxii. 6. This is the right blessing which fathers and mothers give to their children, when they cause God to bless them too. The wrong mother cared not though the child were divided, but the right mother would not have it divided, 1 Kings iii. 26; so wicked parents care not though their children be destroyed, but godly parents would not have them destroyed, but saved, that when they have dwelt together in earth, they may dwell together in heaven. As the midwife frameth the body when it is young and tender, so the parents must frame the mind while it is green and flexible; for youth is the seed-time of virtue. They which are called fathers are called by the name of God, Luke xi. 2, to warn them that they are instead of God to their children, which teacheth all his sons. What example have children but their parents? And sure the providence of God doth ease their charge more than they are aware of; for a child will learn better of his father than of any other. And therefore we read of no schoolmaster in the Scripture but the parents;[1] for when Christ saith to the Jews, John viii. 39, 'If ye be the sons of Abraham, ye will do the works of your father Abraham,' he sheweth that sons use to walk in their father's steps, whether they be good or bad.

It is a marvellous delight to the father and mother when people say that their children are like them; but if they be like them in godliness, it is as great delight to others as to their parents; or else we say that they are so like, that they are the worse for it. Well doth David call children *arrows*, Ps. cxxvii. 4; for if they be well bred, they shoot at their parents' enemies; and if they be evil bred, they shoot at their parents. Therefore many parents want a staff to stay them in their age, because they prepared none before; like old Eli, which was corrected himself for not correcting his sons, 1 Sam. ii. 29. Are not children called the fruit of their parents? Ps. cxxxii. 11. Therefore, as a good tree is known by bringing forth good fruits, Mat. xii. 33, so parents should shew their godliness in the education of their children, which are their fruit. For this cause the Jews were wont to name their children so when they were born, that ever after, if they did but think upon their names, they would put them in mind of that religion which they should

[1] Except of king's sons.

profess; for they did signify something that they should learn, 1 Sam. i. 20.

An admonition to such as call their children at all adventures, sometimes by the names of dogs, even as they prove after. In 1 Kings ii. 2, we have David instructing his sons; in Gen. xlix., Jacob correcting his sons; and in Job i., Job praying for his sons. These three put together,—instructing, correcting, and praying,—make good children, and happy parents.

Once Christ took a child, and set him in the midst of his disciples, and said, 'He which will receive the kingdom of heaven, must receive it as a little child,' Luke xviii. 17; shewing that our children should be so innocent, so humble, and so void of evil, that they may be taken for examples of the children of God. Therefore, in Ps. cxxvii. 4, children are called 'the heritage of the Lord,' to shew that they should be trained as though they were not men's children, but God's, that they may have God's heritage after. Thus if you do, your servants shall be God's servants, and your children shall be God's children, and your house shall be God's house, like a little church, when others are like a den of thieves, Col. iv. 15.

Now I speak to one which is a mother so soon as she is married; therefore, peradventure, you look that I should shew the duty of stepmothers. Their name doth shew them their duty too; for a *step-mother* doth signify a *stead-mother*; that is, one mother dieth, and another cometh in her stead; therefore, that your love may settle to those little ones as it ought, you must remember that you are their stead-mother, that is, instead of their mother; and therefore to love them, and tender them, and cherish them as their mother did. She must not look upon them like Rehoboam, who told his people that he would be worse unto them than his predecessors; for then they will turn from her, as his subjects did from him; but she must come to them as David came to the people after Saul's death, and said, 'Though your master Saul be dead, yet I will reign over you,' 2 Sam. ii. 7; so she must say to them, Though your mother be dead, yet I will be as a mother; so the children will love her as much as their father. Further, these children are orphans, and therefore you must not only regard them as children, but as orphan children. Now God requireth a greater care over widows and orphans, than over any other women or children, Jer. xxii. 3; Deut. xiv. 29, xxiv. 19, and xxvi. 12.

Lastly, You must remember that saying, Mat. vii. 2, 'As you measure unto others, so it shall be measured unto you again;' that is, as you entreat these children, so another may come after and

entreat your children; for he which hath taken away the first mother, and sent you, can take away the second mother, and send a third, which shall not be like a step-mother to yours, unless you be like a step-mother to these.

If these duties be performed in marriage, then I need not speak of divorcement, which is the rod of marriage, and divideth them which were one flesh, as if the body and soul were parted asunder. But because all perform not their wedlock vows, therefore he which appointed marriage, hath appointed divorcement, as it were taking our privilege from us, when we abuse it. As God hath ordained remedies for every disease, so he hath ordained a remedy for the disease of marriage.

The disease of marriage is adultery, and the medicine hereof is divorcement. Moses licensed them to depart for hardness of heart, Mat. xix. 8; but Christ licenseth them to depart for no cause but adultery. If they might be separated for discord, some would make a commodity of strife; but now they are not best to be contentious, for this law will hold their noses together, till weariness make them leave struggling; like two spaniels which are coupled in a chain, at last they learn to go together, because they may not go asunder. As nothing might part friends, but 'if thine eye offend thee, pull it out,' Mat. v. 32; that is, thy friend be a tempter; so nothing may dissolve marriage but fornication, Mat. xix. 9, which is the breach of marriage, for marriage is ordained to avoid fornication, 1 Cor. vii. 9; and therefore if the condition be broken, the obligation is void.

And besides, so long as all her children are his children, she must needs be his wife, because the father and mother are man and wife; but when her children are not his children, she seems no more to be his wife, but the other's whose children she bears, and therefore to be divorced from him. In all the Old Testament, we read of no divorce between any, which sheweth that they lived chaster than we; yet no doubt this law was better executed amongst them than amongst us. Such a care God had in all ages and callings, to provide for them which live honestly; for divorcement is not instituted for the carnal, but for the chaste, lest they should be tied to a plague while they live; as for the adulterer and adulteress, he hath assigned death to cut them off, lest their breath should infect others, Lev. xx. 10. Thus he which made marriage, did not make it unseparable; for then marriage were a servitude. But as Christ saith of the Sabbath, 'The Sabbath was made for man,' Mark ii. 27; that is, for the benefit of man, and not for the hindrance of man; so marriage was made for man; that is, for the honour of man, and not for the

dishonour of man ; but if marriage should turn to fornication, and when it is turned to fornication, there might be no separation, then marriage were not for the honour of man, but for the trouble, and grief, and dishonour of man. Therefore now ye have heard how divorcement is appointed for a remedy of fornication ; if any be ashamed of this physic, let them be more ashamed of the disease. Because I have spoken more than you can remember, if you ask me what is most needful to bear away, in my opinion, there is one saying of Paul which is the profitablest sentence in all the Scripture for man and wife to meditate often, and examine whether they find it in themselves, as they do in other, lest their marriage turn to sin, which should further them in godliness, 1 Cor. vii. 32, 'The unmarried man careth for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord ; but he that is married careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife. Also the unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, how she may be holy ; but she that is married, careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband;' as though their pleasing God were turned all to pleasing one another ; and their carnal love had eaten their spiritual love, as the lean kine devoured the fat, Gen. xli. 4. Therefore it follows in the next words, 'This I speak for your commodity,' 1 Cor. vii. 35 ; as though there were great commodity in remembering this watchword. All men have not the feeling of God's word, or else such a sentence might be an anchor for the married to stay them, when any temptation goeth about this change, which Paul feared even in them which feared God before.

If thou hast read all this book, and art never the better, yet catch this flower before thou go out of the garden, and peradventure the scent thereof will bring thee back to smell the rest. As the corpse of Asahel made the passengers to stand, 2 Sam. ii. 23, so I placed this sentence in the door of thy passage, to make thee stand and consider what thou doest before thou marriest. For this is the scope and operation of it, to call thy mind to a solemn meditation, and warn thee to live in marriage as in a temptation, which is like to make him worse than he was, as the marriage of Jehoram did, 2 Chron. xxi. 6, if he use not Job's preservative, to be jealous over all his life, Job ix. 28.

The allurements of beauty, the troubles about riches, the charges of children, the losses by servants, the unquietness of neighbours, cry unto him that he is entered into the hardest vocation of all other; and therefore they which have but nine years' apprenticeship to make them good mercers or drapers, have nineteen years before marriage

to learn to be good husbands and wives; as though it were a trade of nothing but mysteries, and had need of double time over all the rest.

Therefore, so often as you think upon this saying, think whether you be examples of it, and it will waken you, and chide you, and lead you a straight path, like the angel which led the servant of Abraham, Gen. xxiv. 42.

Thus have I chalked the way to prepare you unto marriage, as the Levites prepared their brethren to the passover, 2 Chron. xxxv. 6. Remember that this day you are made one, and therefore must have but one will. And now the Lord Jesus, in whom you are contracted, knit your hearts together, that ye may love one another like David and Jonathan, 1 Sam. xviii. 1; and go before you in this life like the star which went before the Gentiles, Mat. ii. 9, that ye may begin, and proceed, and end, in his glory! To whom be all glory for ever! Amen.

# A TREATISE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

IN TWO SERMONS.

## THE EPISTLE TO THE TREATISE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

In the first sermon the adversary is confuted. In the second sermon the communicants are prepared. In both are many observations, and the words of the text expounded. Now labour for thyself as I have laboured for thee: I would have thee profit somewhat more by this book, because it hath weakened me more than all the rest. Farewell.

# A TREATISE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

## THE FIRST SERMON.

*The Lord Jesus, in the night that he was betrayed, took bread: and, when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.*—1 Cor. XI. 23, 24.

The word and the sacraments are the two breasts wherewith our mother doth nurse us. Seeing every one receiveth, and few understand what they receive, I thought it the necessariest doctrine to preach of the sacrament, which is a witness of God's promises, a remembrance of Christ's death, and a seal of our adoption. Therefore Christ hath not instituted this sacrament for a fashion in his church, to touch, and feel, and see, as we gaze upon pictures in the windows; but as the woman which had the bloody issue, touching the hem of Christ's garment, drew virtue from Christ himself, because she believed, Mat. ix. 22, so Christ would that we touching these signs, should draw virtue from himself; that is, all the graces which these signs represent. Therefore, as the Levites under the law were bound to prepare their brethren before they came to the passover, 2 Chron. xxxv. 6, so preachers of the gospel should prepare their brethren before they come to the supper of the Lord. For which purpose I have chosen this place to the Corinthians, which is the clearest and fullest declaration of this sacrament in all the Scripture.

*The Lord Jesus, in the night, &c.* The sum of all these words is, the institution and use of the Lord's Supper. First, Paul sheweth the author of it, *the Lord Jesus;* then the time when it was instituted, *in the night that he was betrayed;* then the manner how

he did institute it, *he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave unto his disciples,* &c.; then the end why he did institute it, *for a remembrance of his death.*

Touching the author, he which is signified by it, was the author of it. The Lord Jesus hath bid us to supper. 'I am not worthy (saith John) to loose his shoe,' John i. 27; so we are not worthy to wait at his trencher, and yet he will have us to sit at his table. To him belongeth the power to ordain sacraments in his church, because he fulfilled the sacraments of the law. When Christ came, the passover ceased, because he is our passover; that is, the Lamb by whose blood we are saved, Rev. vii. 14. When Christ came, circumcision ceased, because he is our circumcision; that is, the purifier and cleanser of our sins.

Now these two sacraments are fulfilled, he hath appointed two other sacraments for them. Instead of the Paschal lamb which the Jews did eat, he hath given us another Lamb to eat, which John calleth 'The Lamb of God,' John i. 29; that is, himself, upon whom all do feed, whosoever do receive the sacrament with an assured faith that Christ died to possess them of life. The breaking of the bread doth signify the wounding of the body; the pouring out of the wine doth signify the shedding of his blood; the eating of the bread and drinking of the wine doth signify that his flesh and blood do nourish in us life eternal, as the bread and wine do nourish the life present.

Instead of circumcision, which began at Abraham, Gen. xvii. 10, he hath ordained baptism, which began at John, Mat. iii. 10, a more lively representation of the true circumcision of the heart, because it representeth unto us the blood of Christ, which washeth our souls, as the water in baptism washeth our bodies, Rev. i. 5.

Touching the time, 'In the night,' (saith Paul); therefore this sacrament is called the Lord's Supper, because it was instituted at night, when they used to sup. But what night? Even 'that night (saith Paul) when he was betrayed.' That night which he should have cursed, as Job did the day of his birth, if he had suffered against his will; that night when he should have thought to destroy men, as men conspired to destroy him; that night (saith Paul) this sacrament of grace, and peace, and life began; 'Even that night when we betrayed him.' Many nights did he spend in watching and praying for us; and is there a night now for us to betray him? That was a dark night, when men went about to put out the sun which brought them light. Who can but wonder to see how Christ, and they for whom Christ came, were occupied at one time? When

they devised mischief against him, and sought all means to destroy him, then he consulted how to save them, and instituted the same night this blessed sacrament, to convey all his graces and blessings unto them, 'Even that night when they betrayed him.'

The reason why this action was deferred until night, is, because that was the time appointed by the law to eat the passover, which was like a predecessor of this sacrament. The reason why he deferred it until his last night, was because the passover could not be ended before the fulness of time, and the true Paschal Lamb were come to be slain instead of the other. Therefore how fitly did Christ end the passover, which was a sign of his suffering, so presently before his suffering! And beside, how sweetly did he confirm his disciples' faith, whenas they should see that the next day performed before their eyes, which over-night, both in the passover and in the sacrament, was so lively resembled unto them? If any man from this do gather, that we ought to eat the Lord's Supper at night, as Christ did, he must understand that we have not the same cause to do so which Christ had, because of the passover. And therefore the church, which hath discretion of times and places, hath altered both the time and the place, using the temples instead of the chamber, and the morning instead of the evening; for indifferent things are ruled by order and decency.

Touching the manner, 'He took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it unto them,' ver. 23, 24. He would not eat it nor break it before he had given thanks to God. What need he, which was God, give thanks to God, but to shew us what we should do when we eat ourselves? 'In all things give thanks,' saith Paul, 1 Thes. v. 18, whereby we declare that all things come from God; but the wicked believe easier that God doth take than that he doth give; and therefore they never pray heartily unto him for anything, nor feelingly thank him for it; for which the Lord complaineth, saying, 'I have loved you; yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us?' Mal. i. 2, shewing that we are worse than the ox, which knoweth its feeder, Isa. i. 3; and if that we acknowledge all things from God, yet we do like Lot,—'Is it not a little one?' saith he, when he craved to go unto Zoar, Gen. xix. 20, as though it were not much which he asked,—so mince and extenuate the gifts of God before we receive them and after; like them which have a grace for dinner and none for breakfast, as though they had their dinners from God, and breakfasts of their own.

Our EXAMPLE did not so. Although it was but bread which he received, yet he was more thankful for bread than many which bury

the fowls, and fishes, and beasts in their belly; for if account of all were kept, for one that prayeth, 'Give us ths day our daily bread,' Luke xi. 3, a hundred take their bread and meat, and sleep too, which never pray for it.

'After he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave unto them, and said, Take, eat;' for when he had given thanks to God, then it was sanctified and blessed, and lawful to eat; for when thou servest God, then it is lawful for thee to use God's blessings, then thou mayest eat and drink, as Christ did, but not before; for these things were created to serve them which serve God. If thou dost not serve him for them, thou encroachest upon God's blessings, and stealest his creatures which are no more thine than thou art his, for the good God created all things for good men, as the devil's possessions are reserved for evil men.

Therefore, as Christ would not break the bread before he had given thanks to the founder, so know that there is something to be done before thou receive any benefit of God, and presume not to use his creatures with more liberty than his Son did, which did not eat without giving thanks, nor rise again without singing a psalm.

It followeth, 'This is my body.' Here is the fruit of his thanks before; he prayed that the bread and wine might be blessed, and they were blessed. As Isaac's blessing shewed itself upon Jacob whom he blessed, Gen. xxvii., so Christ his blessing appeared straight upon these mysteries, for it could not be said before, 'This is my body,' because it was mere bread; but now it may be called his body, because his blessing hath infused that virtue into it, that it doth not only represent his body, but convey his body and himself unto us. The efficacy of this blessing is in this sacrament ever since sanctifying it unto us as well as it did to the apostles, even as Christ's prayer stayed Peter's faith after Christ was dead, Luke xxii. 32.

Now ye have heard the meaning of these words, 'He took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it.' You shall see with what a mystical resemblance they unite Christ and us. First, as Christ in the supper took bread to feed us, so in his birth he took our flesh to save us, Heb. ii. 16. Secondly, as Christ, when he had taken the bread, blessed the bread to make it a spiritual food, so Christ, when he had taken our flesh, poured forth most rich and precious graces into it to make it food of life unto us, John xvii. 19. Thirdly, as Christ when he had blessed the bread brake the bread, so Christ, when he had filled his body with most precious graces, brake it up like a rich treasure-house: his hands by the nails, his back by the

stripes, his head by the thorns, his side by the spear, that out of every hole a river of grace and goodness might issue and flow forth unto us, 1 Peter ii. 24. Lastly, as Christ gave the bread when he had broken it, so Christ by a lively faith communicateth his body after he hath crucified it, Eph. iii. 17. Hereby we are taught that when we see the minister take the bread to feed us, we may conceive that Christ, being God from everlasting, took our flesh to save us. When we see the minister bless the bread to a holy use, we must conceive that Christ, by uniting the Godhead unto it, sanctified his flesh for our redemption. When we see the minister break the bread to sustain our bodies, we must conceive that Christ in his death brake his body to refresh our souls. When we see the minister give the bread to our hand, we must conceive that Christ as truly offereth himself to our faith to be received of us.

Because upon these words the papists ground their transubstantiation, that is, that the bread is changed into Christ's flesh, and the wine is turned into Christ's blood, whereby we eat the same body which died upon the cross, and drink the same blood which issued out of his side; that you may see the blindness of this popish dream, I would have you but mark every word of the Scripture, how they make against transubstantiation, that you may see them slain like Goliath with their own sword, 1 Sam. xvii. 51. Even as God made Caiaphas speak against himself, John xviii. 14, so the Scriptures which heretics allege do make against themselves, like the Baalites which wounded their own flesh, 1 Kings xviii. 28. I may liken their allegations to Satan's; when he tempted Christ in the wilderness, he alleged but one sentence of Scripture for himself, Mat. iv. 4, and that psalm out of which he borrowed it, Ps. xci. 11, made so plain against him, that he was fain to pick here a word and there a word, and leave out that which went before, and skip in the midst, and omit that which came after, or else he had marred his cause. The Scripture is so holy, and pure, and true, that no word nor syllable thereof can make for the devil, or for sinners, or for heretics; yet, as the devil alleged Scripture, though it made not for him, but against him, so do the libertines, and epicures, and heretics, as though they had learned at his school.

Now, there is no sentence of the Scripture, which the wiser papists allege boldly for their transubstantiation, but this, that Christ said, 'This is my body,' Mat. xxvi. 26; by which they may prove as well that Christ is a door, because he saith, 'I am the door,' John x. 7, 9; or a vine, because he saith, 'I am the vine,' John xv. 1; for his sayings are like. Figurative speeches must not

be construed literally; but this is heretics' fashion. If you mark, you shall see throughout that all the testimonies which the papists allege for their heresies, are either tropes, or figures, or allegories, or parables, or allusions, or dark speeches; which when they presume to expound allegorically, or literally, without conference of any other scriptures, then they wander and stray from the mark, or else it is impossible that the truth should maintain error, that is, that the Scriptures should speak for heresy, if it were not wrested and perverted; therefore we see that Eve never erred, until she corrupted the text, Gen. iii. 3.

Now we will enter the lists with our adversaries, and see whether these words do prove that the bread and wine are turned into Christ's body. Paul saith, 'Jesus took bread;' well then, yet it is bread. When he had taken it, then he blessed it. What did he bless? the bread which he took; well then, yet it is bread. When he had blessed it, then he brake it. What did he break? the bread which he blessed; well then, yet it is bread. When he had broken it, then he gave it. What did he give? the bread which he brake; well then, yet it is bread. When he had given it, then they did eat it. What did they eat? the bread which he gave them; well then, yet it is bread. When they did eat it, then he said, 'This is my body'. What did he call his body? the bread which they did eat; well then, yet it is bread. If it be bread all this while, when he did take it, and bless it, and brake it, and gave it, and they did eat it, when is it turned into his body? Here they stand like the Sadducees, Mat. xxii. 34, as mute as fishes.

2. Now that ye may see, that not we only say it is bread and wine after the consecration; in verse 27, Christ himself doth call it bread and wine after he had given it, as he did before. And in Mark he saith, 'I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine,' Mark xiv. 25. Here Christ saith, that it was the fruit of the vine which he drank, but his blood is not the fruit of the vine, but wine; therefore wine was his drink, and not blood.

3. Besides, if you would hear Paul expound Christ, he sheweth that all our fathers had the same substance of Christ in their sacraments that we have in ours; for he saith, 1 Cor. x. 4, 'They all did eat the same spiritual meat, and all drink the same spiritual drink.' Straight he saith, that this meat and this drink was Christ. Mark that, he saith not only 'they did eat the same meat' that we did eat, but he saith 'that the meat was Christ;' and not only so, but to shew that Christ is not a corporal meat as the papists say, he saith he is a spiritual meat, as we say; therefore you see that we

do not eat him corporally, no more than our fathers; but that as they did eat him spiritually, so do we; for spiritual meat must be eaten spiritually, as corporal meat is eaten corporally.

4. Again, for the figures to be turned into the thing signified by them, is utterly against the nature of a sacrament, and makes it no sacrament, because there is no sign; for every sacrament doth consist of a sign, and a thing signified: the sign is ever an earthly thing, and that which is signified is an heavenly thing. This shall appear in all examples: as, in paradise there was a very tree for the sign, and Christ the thing signified by it, Gen. ii. 9; in circumcision there was a cutting off of the skin, and the cutting off of sin, Gen. xvii. 11; in the passover there was a lamb, and Christ, Exod. xii. 3; in the Sabbath there was a day of rest, and eternal rest, Exod. xxiii. 11; in the sacrifices there was an offering of some beasts, and the offering of Christ, Heb. ix. 1; in the sanctuary there was the holy place, and heaven, Exod. xxx.; in the propitiatory there was the golden covering, and Christ our cover, Exod. xxv. 24; in the wilderness there was a rock yielding water, and Christ yielding his blood, Exod. xvii. 16; in the apparition there was a dove, and the Holy Ghost, Mat. iii. 16; in the manna there was bread, and Christ, John vi. 45; in baptism there is very water which washeth us, and Christ's blood washing us, John i. 33; so in the supper of Christ there is very bread and wine for the sign, and the body and blood of Christ for the thing signified, 1 Cor. xi. 26, or else this sacrament is against the nature of all other sacraments.

5. Again, there must be a proportion between the passover and the Lord's supper, because this was figured by the other, Exod. xii. Now, the Jews had in their passover bread, and wine, and a lamb; so our Saviour Christ, instituting his last supper, left bread, and wine, and a lamb, the which name is given to himself, because he came like a lamb, and died like a lamb.

Again, if Christ's very body was offered in the sacrament, then it were not a sacrament, but a sacrifice, which two differ as much as giving and taking; for in a sacrifice we give, and in a sacrament we receive; and therefore we say our sacrifice, and Christ's sacrament.

6. Again, every sacrifice was offered upon the altar. Now, mark the wisdom of the Holy Ghost: lest we should take this for a sacrifice, he never names *altar* when he speaks of it, but 'the table of the Lord.' Therefore it is no doubt but the devil hath kept the name of altar, that we might think it a sacrifice.

7. Again, if the bread were Christ's flesh, and the wine his blood;

as these two are separate one from the other, so Christ's flesh should be separate from his blood; but his body is not divided, for then it were a dead body.

8. Again, that which remaineth doth nourish the body, and relish in the mouth as it did before, which could not be but that it is the same food which it was before.

9. Again, I would ask whose are this whiteness, and hardness, and roundness, and coldness? None of them say that it is the whiteness, and hardness, and roundness, and coldness of Christ's body; therefore it must needs be the whiteness, and hardness, and roundness, and coldness of the bread, or else qualities should stand without substances, which is as if one should tell you of a house without a foundation.

10. Again, as Christ dwelleth in us, so he is eaten of us; but he dwelleth in us only by faith, Eph. iii. 17; therefore he is eaten only by faith.

11. Again, none can be saved without the communion of the body of Christ; but if all should communicate with it corporally, then neither infants nor any of our fathers, the patriarchs or the prophets, should be saved, because they receive it not so.

12. Again, Christ saith not *this wine*, but *this cup;* and therefore, by their conclusion, not only the wine should be turned into blood, but the cup too.

13. Again, Paul saith, 'They which receive unworthily, receive their own damnation.' But if it were the flesh of Christ, they should rather receive salvation than damnation, because Christ saith, 'He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath life everlasting,' John vi. 54.

14. Again, if they would hear an angel from heaven. When Christ's body was glorified, an angel said to the woman, 'He is risen, and is not here,' Mat. xxviii.; as if he should say, His body is but in one place at once, or else he might have been there, though he was risen.

15. Again, why do they say in receiving this sacrament ever since the primitive church, 'Lift up your hearts,' if they have all in their mouths.

To end this controversy, here we may say, as the disciples said to Christ, John vi. 68, 'Whither shall we go from thee?' I mean we need not to go to any other expositor than Christ himself. Therefore mark what he saith. At first, when Christ said that he was the bread of life, and that all which would live must eat him, they murmured until he expounded his words; and how did he expound his

words? Thus, 'He that cometh unto me hath eaten, and he that believeth in me hath drunk.' After, when he instituted the sacrament in like words, they murmured not, which they would, as before, if he had not resolved them before, that to eat his body, and to drink his blood, was nothing but to come to him and believe in him.

After he had said so, they murmured not, because they did see some reason in it. As it is plainly said, 'This is my body,' so it is plainly said, 'These words are spirit;' that is, they must be understood spiritually, and not literally.

But if it be flesh indeed, why do they not satisfy the simple people how they may eat this flesh in Lent, when they forbid them to eat any flesh? They must needs eat it doubtfully, and he which doubteth, saith James, receiveth nothing; therefore he which eateth the mass receiveth nothing.

I did not allege the fathers in my sermon; but if any suspend his assent till they bring in their verdict, let him hear them make confession of their belief.

Augustine[1] saith, 'The Lord doubted not to say, "This is my body," when he gave only a sign or sacrament of his body.'

Tertullian[2] saith, '"This is my body," that is, a sign of his body.'

Ambrose[3] saith, 'The bread and wine remain still the same thing that they were.'

Theodoret[4] saith, 'After the consecration the mystical signs do not cast off their own nature, but abide still in their first substance and form.'

Origen[5] saith, 'The bread that is sanctified with the word of God, as touching the material substance thereof, goeth into the belly, and forth again like other meats.'

Irenæus[6] saith, 'That it hath two things in it; one earthly, and the other heavenly.'

Cyril[7] saith, 'Our sacraments avouch not the eating of a man.'

Cyprian[8] saith, 'The Lord called bread, made of many grains, his body, and called wine, made of many grapes, his blood.'

Athanasius[9] saith, 'Christ made mention of his ascension into heaven, that he might withdraw his disciples from corporal and fleshly eating.'

Chrystosom[10] saith, 'God giveth us things spiritual under things

[1] Aug. upon the 3d Psalm.
[2] Tertul. against Marcion, the 4th book.
[3] Ambro. 4th book 4th chapter of Sacraments.
[4] Theod. Dialogue i.
[5] Orig. on Mat. xv.
[6] Iren. lib. iv. cap. xxxiv. against Valentius.
[7] Ad ob. Theod. Anathematis.
[8] Cyp. Epist. lib. i.
[9] Hom. lx. to the people of Antioch.
[10] To Cæsarius the monk.

visible and natural.' And again,[1] 'Being sanctified, it is delivered from the name of bread, and exalted to the name of the Lord's body, although the nature of the bread still remain.'

And because they believe that the pope cannot err, pope Gelasius setteth to his hand, and saith with the rest, 'Neither the substance of the bread, or nature of the wine, cease to be more than they were before.'

Tell us, papists, do not these fathers speak as plain as we? Canst thou avouch transubstantiation more flatly than they deny it? How had this heresy been chased, if the devil had hatched it in their time?

Thus the Scripture on the one side, and the fathers on the other side, did so trouble three arch-papists, Biel, Tonstal, and Fisher, that Gabriel Biel[2] saith, How the body of Christ is in the sacrament, is not found in the canon of the Bible.

Tonstal[3] saith, 'It had been better to leave every man to his own conjecture, as they were before the council of Lateran, than to bring in such a question.'

Fisher[4] saith, 'No man can prove by the words of the gospel, that any priest in these days doth consecrate the very body and blood of Christ.'

Here is fulfilled, 'Out of thine own mouth I will condemn thee,' Luke xix. 22. But we will carry the matter so, because a judge must have two ears, therefore now let them speak.

Because they cannot tell how the bread and wine should be turned into flesh and blood, and yet appear bread and wine still, they say it is a miracle; but how do they prove it? If they contend it is a miracle, they must shew us a sign, for every miracle may be seen, like all the miracles of Moses, and Christ, and the apostles, and therefore a miracle is called a sign, because it may be seen like a sign, and the word signifieth a wonder. And the Jews craving a miracle said, 'Shew us a miracle,' as though they were taught to judge of miracles by sight. All which doth shew, that a miracle may be seen, but here no miracle is seen.

Again, a miracle, especially in the time of the gospel, is an extraordinary thing, but they make this an ordinary thing, for if the bread and wine be turned into flesh and blood, then miracles are as common as sacraments; and so, because they have mass every day, they should work miracles every day.

[1] Against Eutychus the heretic.
[2] Upon the Canon, lect. xl.
[3] First Book of the Sacraments, p. 46.
[4] Against the captivity of Babylon, made by M. Luther.

Lastly, this seemeth strange, that Augustine, whom they so much honour, gathered all the miracles which are written in the Scripture, and yet amongst all speaks not of this, therefore then it was counted no miracle; but Paul speaks of lying miracles, 2 Thess. ii. 9, and this is one of them.

If they say that Christ *can* turn bread and wine into his body, and therefore he *doth*. First, they must prove that he *will*, for they can do many things themselves which they do not, because they will not; therefore it is an old answer that, from *can* to *will*, no argument followeth. The leper did not say unto Christ, 'If thou canst, thou wilt,' but 'If thou wilt, thou canst,' Mark i. 40.

But the question which they think cannot be answered, like their invincible navies, is this: If the bread be not his body, why doth he call it his body? Resolve this knot, and all is clear. Mark then, and we will loose it as well as we can. He saith, 'This is my body,' and he saith after, 'which is broken for you.' Why, his body was not broken before he suffered; how did he say then, *which is broken*, before it was broken? There is no sense of it but this: bread was broken, and signified that his body should be broken.

Now, as the breaking of the bread did signify the breaking of his body, so the bread must needs signify his body; but as his body was not broken indeed when the bread was broken, so the bread could not be his body indeed; for then his body should have been broken when the bread was broken; yet let them object what they can.

If, say they, the bread and wine be not changed into his body and blood, why doth he speak so darkly? he might have spoken plainer.

I answer, though this seem dark to papists, yet it was not dark to the apostles, they understood his meaning well enough, and all the rest, for 1215 years after Christ, before transubstantiation was spoken of. If the apostles had not understood his meaning, they would not stick to ask him, as their manner was; until they were acquainted with Christ's phrase, whensoever they doubted upon any of his speeches, they were wont to come unto him, and say, Master, what is thy meaning? Luke viii. 9. But they were used to such phrases; for it was Christ's manner to teach by similitudes, shewing one thing by another, which is the plainest manner of teaching, and most used in holy Scripture, especially in the types and shadows of this sacrament. For example, Christ calleth the lamb the passover, Mat. xxvi. 17, in place whereof this sacrament succeeded; and therefore presently after they had eaten the passover, Christ instituted this sacrament to be used for it. Christ, I say, called the lamb the passover, and yet the passover was this: an angel

passed over the houses of the Israelites, and struck the Egyptians, Exod. xii. 23. This was not a lamb; and yet because a lamb was a sign of this passover, as the bread and wine is of Christ's body, therefore Christ called the lamb the passover, as he called the bread and wine his body.

Again, circumcision is called the covenant, Gen. xvii. 13, and yet circumcision was nothing but the cutting away of a skin; but the covenant is, Gen. xii. 3, 'In Abraham's seed all nations shall be blessed;' 'I will be their God, and they shall be my people;' 'I will defend and save them, and they shall serve and worship me.' This is not circumcision, and yet as though circumcision were the covenant itself, it is called the covenant, because it signifieth the covenant; so bread and wine are called Christ's body, because they signify Christ's body.

Again, baptism is called regeneration, Titus iii. 5, and yet baptism is a dipping of our bodies in water, but regeneration is the renewing of the mind to the image wherein it was created, 1 Cor. vi. 11. This is not baptism, and yet as though baptism were regeneration itself, it is called regeneration, because it signifieth regeneration; so the bread and wine are called Christ's body, because they signify Christ's body.

Again, the cup is called the New Testament, Luke xxii. 20, and yet the cup is but a piece of metal filled with wine; but the New Testament is, 'He which believeth in the Son shall be saved,' John iii. 36. This is not a cup; and yet as though the cup were the New Testament itself, it is called the New Testament, because it signifieth the New Testament; so the bread and wine are called Christ's body, because they signify Christ's body.

They which knew that the lamb is not the passover, though Christ called it the passover; that circumcision is not the covenant, though God called it the covenant; that baptism is not regeneration, though it be called regeneration; that the cup is not the New Testament, though Christ called it the New Testament; could they not as well understand that the bread and wine were not Christ's body, though Christ called them his body? As they understood these speeches, so they understood this speech; therefore they which say, that the bread and wine are Christ's body, because Christ saith, 'This is my body,' Mat. xxvi. 26; may as well say, that the lamb is the passover, because Christ calleth it the passover; that baptism is regeneration, because Paul calleth it regeneration; that the cup is the New Testament, because Christ calleth it the New Testament.

If every sacrament was called by the thing it signified, and yet

never any sacrament was taken for the thing itself, what reason have they to take this sacrament for the thing itself more than all the rest? It is the consent of all writers, that a sacrament is a sign, therefore not the thing signified; no more than the bush at the door is the wine in the cellar. If I call the prince a phœnix, the university a fountain, the court a peacock, the city a sea, the country an hermit; why can the papists understand me, and not understand Christ?

What a dark, and strange, and intricate, and incredible speech had this been for them to understand grossly and literally? Would they think that they did eat Christ's body, when his body stood before them, and he had told them before, that his body was like their body? Nay, this would have required more words, and made them come again with, 'Master, what is thy meaning?' Luke viii. 9. For they were not so instructed yet before the resurrection, to believe everything without questioning, if it were contrary to sense and reason; but as they asked, John iv. 33, who had given him any meat, when he said that he had meat, and they could see none, so they would have asked, What meat is this which we see not? How can every one of us eat his body, and yet he hath but one body, and that body is whole when we eat it? Lo, he standeth before us and saith, that his body is like unto ours, Luke xxiv. 39, and yet he takes bread and breaks it, and gives it unto us to eat, and when we eat it he saith, 'This is my body,' and yet his body standeth before us still. If his body be like ours, as he saith, how can it be eaten, and be there? for ours cannot. Thus they would have questioned if they had not been used to such phrases; but as they could understand him when he called himself a stone, a rock, a door, a window, and a vine, so they picked out his meaning when he had said that bread was his body; for he told them before that he was 'the bread of eternal life,' John vi. 35.

Now the bread of eternal life is not eaten with teeth; for the body cannot eat spiritually, no more than the soul can eat corporally, and therefore he is such a bread as is eaten with faith, and so himself saith in the Gospel of John, John vi. 63. Mark this eating by faith, and all the strife is ended. Flesh and blood, indeed, need not faith to chew them, for the teeth can chew them well enough. Therefore, if the bread and wine were the body of Christ, then we need not faith to eat it; but all those which have teeth might eat Christ's body, yea, the mice might eat it as well as men, for they eat the same bread that we do, as well after it is consecrated as before.

If this be not enough to batter the ruins of this upstart heresy, I will come to interrogatories, and see whether they have learned it by rote or by reason.

If they ground their transubstantiation upon these words of Christ, 'This is my body,' which he spake to his disciples, I ask them whether they receive that body which was mortal, or that body which is glorified? because one of these bodies they must needs receive, either his mortal body or his glorified body. If they say that it is his mortal body, the mortal body will not profit them, for you see that mortal food is but for this mortal life; neither hath Christ a mortal body now to communicate unto them, because it is changed to an immortal body; therefore they cannot receive the mortal body, because Christ hath not a mortal body to give unto them. If they say that they receive his glorified body, then they must fly from this text, for at that time Christ had not any glorified body.

When this sacrament was instituted, and Christ said, 'This is my body,' his body was not glorified, because the sacrament was instituted before his death, and his body was glorified after his resurrection; therefore if they receive the same body which the apostles received, as they say they do, they cannot receive a glorified body, because then Christ had not a glorified body to communicate unto them.

Thus the rocks and sands are on both sides them; they receive a body neither mortal nor immortal; if Christ hath any such body, judge you. Here they stand like a fool, which cannot tell on his tale. Nebuchadnezzar dreamed a dream, and knew not what it meant, Dan. iv. 15.

Beside, I ask them to whom Christ spake when he said, 'This is my body.' Mark saith he spake it to them, Mark xiv. 24, that is, to his disciples. Well, then, if these words, *This is my body*, were not spoken to the signs, but to the persons, not to the bread and wine, but to the receivers, as the words which follow, 'Do this in remembrance of me;' if these words were not spoken to the bread and wine, then it is plain that they do not change the nature of the bread and wine. If the nature of them be not altered, then the substance remaineth, and then we receive no other substance with them, because two substances cannot be in one place.

What, then, is there nothing in the sacrament but bread and wine, like an hungry nuncion?[1] Nay, we say not that the sacrament

[1] That is, a scanty *luncheon*, consisting of a bit of bread and a glass of wine. —Ed.

is nothing but a bare sign, or that you receive no more than you see; for Christ saith that it is his body, and Paul saith, 1 Cor. x. 16, that it is the communion of Christ's body and blood. Therefore there is more in sacramental bread than in common bread; though the nature be not changed, yet the use is changed; it doth not only nourish the body, as it did before, but also it bringeth a bread with it which nourisheth the soul; for as sure as we receive bread, so sure we receive Christ; not only the benefits of Christ, but Christ, although not in a popish manner; yet we are so joined and united unto him, even as though we were but one body with him.

As the spouse doth not marry with the lands and goods, but with the man himself, and being partaker of him, is made partaker of them, so the faithful do not only marry with Christ's benefits, but with Christ himself; and being partakers of him, they are made partakers of his benefits; for Christ may not in any wise be divided from his benefits, no more than the sun from his light.

It is said, Rom. viii. 32, 'The Father gave us his Son,' and so the Son giveth us himself; for as the bread is a sign of his body, so the giving of the bread is a sign of the giving of his body. Thus he lieth before us like a pelican, which letteth her young ones suck her blood; so that we may say, The Lord invited us to supper, and he himself was our meat.

But if you ask how this is? I must answer, It is a mystery; but if I could tell it, it were no mystery. Yet as it is said, Dan. iii. 25, when three men walked in the midst of the furnace, 'one like the Son of God walked amongst them,' so when the faithful receive the bread and wine, one like the Son of God seemeth to come unto them, which fills them with peace, and joy, and grace, that they marvel what it was which they received besides bread and wine.

For example, thou makest a bargain with thy neighbour for house or land, and receivest in earnest a piece of gold. That which thou receivest is but a piece of gold, but now it is a sign of thy bargain; and if thou keep not touch with him, haply it will clasp thee for all that thou art worth; so that which thou receivest is bread, but this bread is a sign of another matter, which passeth bread.

Again, thou hast an obligation in thy hand, and I ask thee what hast thou there? and thou sayest, I have here an hundred pounds. Why, say I, there is nothing but paper, ink, and wax; oh but by this, sayest thou, I will recover an hundred pounds, and that is as

good. So beloved, this is as good, that under these signs you receive the virtue of Christ's body and blood by faith, as if you did eat his body, and drink his blood indeed, which were horrible to think, that any should devour their God, thinking thereby to worship him; never any heretic nor idolater conceived so grossly of their God before the papist. We read of a people which did eat men, but never of any people which did eat their God.

All the apostles say that it was needful that Christ should take our flesh; but no apostle saith that it is needful that we should take Christ's flesh; for all the blessings of Christ are apprehended by faith, and nothing fit to apprehend him whom we see not but faith; and therefore one of their own pillars said, 'Believe, and thou hast eaten.' Faith doth more in religion than the mouth; or else we might say with the woman, Luke xi. 27, 'Blessed are the breasts which gave thee suck,' and so none should be blessed but Mary; but Mary was not blessed because Christ was in her body, but because Christ was in her heart. And lest this should seem incredible unto you, because Mary is called blessed among women; when Christ heard the woman say, 'Blessed are the breasts which gave thee suck,' he replied unto her, 'Blessed are they which hear the word of God, and keep it;' 'These are my brethren, and sisters, and mother,' saith Christ, Luke viii. 21, as though the rest were no kin to him in heaven, though they were kin in earth. Thus if Christ were in thy body, and thou shouldst say as this woman, 'Blessed is the body that hath thee in it;' nay, would Christ say, 'Blessed is the heart that hath me in it.' If Mary were no whit better for having Christ in her arms, nor for having him in her body, how much better art thou for having him in thy belly, where thou canst not see him? Must the sun needs come to us, or else cannot his heat and light profit us? Nay, it doth us more good, because it is so far off. So this Sun is gone from us, that he might give more light unto us; which made him say, 'It is good for you that I go from you,' John xvi. 7, therefore away with this carnal eating of spiritual things. 'Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou,' saith Solomon, 'surpasseth them all,' Prov. xxxi. 29. So many heretics have spoken absurdly, but this surpasseth them all, that Christ must be applied like physic; as though his blood could not profit us unless we did drink it, and swallow it as a potion. Is this the papists' union with Christ? Is this the manner whereby we are made one flesh with Christ, to eat his flesh? Nay, when he took our flesh unto him, and was made man, then we were united to him in the flesh, and not now. Christ took our flesh, we take

not his flesh, but believe he took ours; therefore if you would know whether Christ's body be in the sacrament, I say unto you as Christ said unto Thomas, Touch, feel, and see, John xx. 27. In visible things God hath appointed our eyes to be judges; for as the spirit discerneth spiritual objects, so sense discerneth sensible objects. As Christ taught Thomas to judge of his body, so may we, and so should they; therefore if you cannot see his body, nor feel his body, you may gather by Christ's sayings to Thomas, that he would not have you believe that it is his body; for my body, saith Christ, may be seen and felt. And thus transubstantiation is found a liar.

Now if you ask me why Christ called the sign by the name of the thing itself, I ask thee again, mayest thou say, when thou seest the picture of the queen, This is the queen? and when thou seest the picture of a lion, This is a lion? and may not Christ say when he seeth a thing like his body, 'This is my body'?

I shewed you before that every sacrament is called by the name of the thing which it doth signify, and therefore why should we stumble at this more than the rest? The reason why the signs have the names of the things, is to strike a deep reverence in us, to receive this sacrament of Christ reverently, sincerely, and holily, as if that Christ were there present in body and blood himself.

And surely as he which defaceth the king's seal is convicted of contempt and treason to his own person; so he which profaneth these seals of Christ doth not worship Christ, but despise him, and that contempt shall be required of him, as if he had contemned Christ himself. This is the reason why Christ calleth the signs of his body, his body, to make us take this sacrament reverently, because we are apt to contemn it, as the Jews did their manna.

It followeth, ver. 22, 'Do this in remembrance of me;' that is, these signs shall be a remembrance of my death. When you break the bread, you shall remember the wounding of my body; and when you drink the wine, you shall remember the shedding of my blood. If we do this in remembrance of Christ's body, which was broken like the bread, it is an argument that his body is not there, because remembrance is not of things present, but of things absent; we remember not, but we see that which is before us. This might put the papists in remembrance that Christ is not sacrificed now, when we do but remember his sacrifice. This is not Christ's sacrifice, but a remembrance of his sacrifice; he was sacrificed before, and now it is applied, lest his sacrifice should be in vain. This was done once really, when he offered himself upon the cross; therefore that offering was called a sacrifice, because he was sacrificed indeed; but

this offering is called a sacrament, because it is but a sign of his sacrifice.

If Christ in this sacrament were offered indeed, then it should be called a sacrifice, as his once offering was; but because it is but a remembrance of his sacrifice, therefore it is called a sacrament. This is not a sacrifice of Christ, but a sacrifice of ourselves. Lest we should take it to be a sacrifice of Christ, Christ himself calleth it a remembrance of his sacrifice, 'Do this in my remembrance.'

Here is our work. As Christ hath done, so must we do; so we minister, and so you receive. We can give you nothing but that which we have received from him, as Paul saith. Therefore, if Christ did not give his mortal body which stood before them, and could not profit them, nor his glorified body, which was not glorified then, and when he was glorified ascended up into heaven, and there abideth, how can these juggling priests make their God again which made them? They can no more turn wine into blood and bread into flesh than they can command a gnat to become a camel; for it is a greater work to make God than to make the world. Therefore, as Christ saith, Mat. xxiv. 23, 'When they tell you, Here is Christ, and there is Christ, believe them not.' So when they tell you that Christ is in heaven, and that Christ is in earth, in this place and that place, believe them not; for Elijah's ascension was a figure of Christ's ascension. When Elias was ascended, yet some sought for his body upon earth, 2 Kings ii. 17; so though Christ be ascended, yet many seek his body upon earth; but as they could not find Elias's body, so these cannot find Christ's body, although they have sought three hundred years.

But if his body were upon earth, as they say, should we handle it and touch it now it is glorified? After his resurrection he said unto Mary, John xx. 17, 'Touch me not,' because his body was glorified; that is, not to be touched with fingers any more, but with faith. Therefore we read of none which touched his body (after it was risen) but only Thomas, to settle his faith.

Thus you see we need to suborn no witnesses, for every word in this text which they allege for transubstantiation doth make against transubstantiation; whereby, if antichrist doth signify those which are against Christ, you see who may be called antichrist. There is no question in popery (except purgatory, the Pope's publican and tasker) about which the papists are at such civil wars among themselves as about this transubstantiation. They cannot tell when the change beginneth, nor what manner of change it is, nor how long the change continueth; some hang one way, and some another,

like the Midianites which fought one against another, Judges vii. 22. And no marvel though their consciences stagger about it; for to shew you the right father of it, it was one of the dreams of Innocentius[1] the Third, in the year of our Lord 1215. So many years passed before transubstantiation was named, and then a pope set it first on foot. So it came out of Rome the grandam of all heresies; and for want of Scriptures hath been defended with fire and sword, and swallowed more martyrs than all the gulfs of the papal sea beside.

Now, when the doctrines of men go for scriptures, you shall see how many errors rush into the church; for grant but this to Pope Innocentius, as the papists do, that the bread and wine are changed into Christ's body:

1. First, It will follow that Christ's body is not ascended up to heaven, because it remaineth upon earth, and so one of the articles of our faith shall be falsified, which saith, 'He is ascended into heaven,' Acts i. 9–11; or if he be ascended and descended again, another article will be falsified, which saith that 'he sitteth at the right hand of his Father,' Rom. viii. 34; that is, as Peter saith, Acts iii. 21, he abideth in heaven.

2. Secondly, It will follow that Christ hath not a true body, but a fantastical body, because it may be in many places at one time; for if his body be in the sacrament, he must needs have so many bodies as there be sacraments; nay, he must have so many bodies as there be bits in every sacrament.

3. Thirdly, It will follow that his body is divided from his soul, and consequently is a dead body, because the bread is only changed into his body and not into his soul.

4. Fourthly, It will follow that the wicked, and profane, and reprobate may receive Christ as well as the godly, because they have a mouth to eat as well as the best.

5. Fifthly, It will follow that Christ's sacrifice once for all was not sufficient, Heb. ix. 28, and x. 12, because we must sacrifice him again, and break his body, and shed his blood, as the Jews crucified him upon the cross.

6. Sixthly, It will follow that the bread, being turned into the body of our Redeemer, hath a part in our redemption as well as Christ.

7. Seventhly, It will follow that Christ did eat his own body; for all the fathers say that he did eat the same bread which he gave to his disciples.

[1] A monster of his age.

8. Lastly, It doth follow that a massing priest should be the creator of his Creator, because he makes him which made him. All these absurdities are hatched of transubstantiation.

Thus when men devise articles of their own, while they strike upon the anvil, the sparks fly in their face; and they are like the man which began to build, and could not finish it. When I see the papist in so many absurdities for entertaining one error, methinks he seemeth like a collier which is grimed with his own coals. Therefore, as in manners we should think of Peter's saying, Acts v. 29, 'Whether it be meet to obey God or men,' so in doctrines we should think, whether it be meet to believe God or men.

Thus you have heard the author of this sacrament, 'the Lord Jesus;' the time when it was instituted, 'in the night when he was betrayed;' the manner how it was instituted, 'after thanksgiving;' the end why it was instituted, 'for a remembrance of his death;' and the discovery of transubstantiation, one of the last heresies which Babylon hatched. Now they which have been patrons of it before should do like the father and mother of an idolater, Deut. xiii. 6–9, that is, lay the first hand upon him to shorten his life. Thus I end. Think what account ye shall give of that ye have heard.

# A TREATISE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

## THE SECOND SERMON.

*After the same manner also he took the cup when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye shall eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man therefore examine himself, and so let him eat of this bread, and drink of this cup.*—1 Cor. XI. 25–28.

Here I am to speak of the second service, as it were, at the Lord's table, and of that preparation which is like the wedding-garment, that every man must bring to his banquet. These words are diversely repeated of the evangelists. Here it is said, 'This cup is the new testament in my blood.' In Matthew and in Mark it is said, 'This cup is my blood of the new testament,' Mat. xxvi. 28, Mark xiv. 24. This is the first mention which Christ makes of a testament, as though now his promises deserved the name of a testament, because the seal is set unto them, which before this sacrament were not sealed, but like a bare writing without a signet. This word *testament* doth imply a promise, and therefore teacheth us, that the sacrament doth confirm, and strengthen, and nourish our faith, because it sealeth the promise which we should believe.

Here it is to be noted, that Christ doth not only speak of a testament, but he calleth it a *new testament*, which words never met together before; as though the law were for the old man to mor-

tify him, and the gospel for the new man to comfort him again; or as if the old testament had so washed her face, and changed her apparel, at Christ's coming, that one would not think it the same, but a new testament, because even now she was shadowed with a thousand ceremonies, and now they are gone from her like a mist at the sun-rising. As Christ calleth love 'a new commandment,' John xiii. 34, because he renewed it, like a law worn out of memory; so he calleth the promise of salvation 'a new testament,' because, as it was renewed to Shem, and after renewed to Abraham, and after renewed to David, so now he renewed it again, which should be alway new and fresh unto us. Every testament is confirmed with blood, Heb. ix. 18. The old testament was confirmed by the blood of goats, and bullocks, and rams; but the new testament is confirmed by the blood of Christ. 'My blood,' saith Christ, 'is the blood of the new testament,' Mat. xxvi.; nay, 'This cup,' saith Christ, 'is the new testament,' Luke xxii. 20. You may see, then, that they may gather as well of Christ's words, that the cup is the new testament, as that the wine is his blood; for Christ saith, 'This cup is the new testament,' as well as he saith, 'This wine is my blood,' or 'This bread is my body.' Beside, when Christ speaks of a new testament, he implieth that the old testament is fulfilled, Heb. viii. 13. The sacrifices and ceremonies of the law did signify Christ before he came, therefore they are fulfilled in his coming. No more sacrifices, no more ceremonies, for the truth is come. Sacrifices and ceremonies are honourably buried with the priesthood of Aaron, let them rest; it is not lawful to violate the sepulchres of the dead, and take their bodies out of earth, as the witch would raise Samuel out of his grave, 1 Sam. xxviii. 14. Therefore they which retain certain ceremonies, which should be abrogated, relics of Judaism, or relics of papism, may be said to violate the sepulchres of the dead, and disturb the deceased, like the witch which presumed to raise Samuel out of his grave.

This testament is called a testament in blood, because the testament and will of a man is confirmed when the man is dead; so Christ confirmed his testament by his death. Moses saith, that 'life is in the blood,' Lev. xvii. 11; so the blood of Christ is the life of this testament. If Christ's blood had not been shed, this testament made unto us had been unprofitable, as the testament of a father is unto his son, if the father should not die, but live; therefore the apostle saith, Heb. ix. 22, 'Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.' Therefore the testament or covenant of the remission of our sins is called the testament in blood; the

blood of Christ is the seal of the testament, which we have to shew unto God for the remission of our sins; and the two sacraments are a seal of that blood, to witness that it was shed.

Again, this is a matter regarded in testaments and wills. To the testament of him that is dead, no man addeth or detracteth; but as the testator made it, so it standeth without alteration. So should this testament of Christ, and this sacrament of Christ; no man should alter it now he is dead, for he which addeth or detracteth, hath a curse in God's books, Deut. iv. 2, Rev. xxii. 18.

Therefore Christ, when he instituted this sacrament, commanded, *Do this*, that is, do as I do, lest they should swerve one whit from his own manner; yet how many gauds have the papists added to it! That he which had heard Christ say, 'Do this in remembrance of me,' and should see how they handle the matter in their mass, could see nothing to remember Christ by, but a veil to hide Christ from him. Therefore this commandment was repeated again, when he gave the wine, 'Do this,' &c.

As he commanded them to eat the bread in remembrance of him, so he commanded them to drink the wine in remembrance of him; nay, he speaks more precisely of the wine than the bread, for he saith of the wine, 'Drink you all of this,' Mat. xxvi. 27, which he saith not of the bread. Surely Christ did foresee, that some proud heretics would do otherwise after him, even as it is come to pass; for the papists do break this commandment of Christ as flatly as Saul brake the commandment of Samuel, 1 Sam. xv. 9. Samuel commanded him to kill the fat and the lean; Saul killed the lean, but not the fat; so Christ commandeth to receive bread and wine, they teach to receive bread, but not wine. Christ saith, 'Drink you all of this;' they say, Drink not all of this. Christ gave the bread and wine to all, they give the bread to all, and the wine to some; their priests receive all, but the people must content themselves with half; the priest eats and drinks, but the people must not drink for spilling on their clothes! Is this the church which cannot err? Do they think to hem Christ in their mass, and shut his ordinance out of their mass? The soldiers divided Christ's coat, Mat. xxvii. 15, but these divide his body, and separate the bread and wine which Christ hath joined. Paul speaketh of heretics which taught, 'Touch not, taste not, handle not,' Col. ii. 21; so these say, Touch not, taste not, handle not, when they should say, Touch, and taste, and handle. Of all heresies, either old or new, there is none so injurious to the common people as the pasture of popish shavelings;

for they may not read the Scriptures, they may not come to councils, they may not examine that which is taught them, they may not be buried without a mortuary, they may not drink at the communion, as though their priests were their lords.

Therefore we may say, as a heathen did, there is no charity in the papists' sacraments, because, like Ananias, Acts v. 2, the priests keep back that which they should distribute, and mangle the sacrifice, as though Eli his sons had left his hook to the massing friars, 1 Sam. ii. 13.

Thus that ye may know who succeedeth the pharisees, they have fulfilled that which the pharisees did, that is, 'by their own commandments they have made the commandment of God of no effect,' Mark vii. 13. For whereas the purpose of Christ was to tie our faith wholly to himself, that we should not seek for anything without him, knowing that the maintenance of this life hath need both of meat and drink, to teach us that sufficiency is in himself, by bread and wine he sheweth, that he is instead both of meat and drink, that is, instead of all; which signification is taken away where the wine is not given as well as the bread. Therefore, as it is said of a horrible and odious crime, 'Consider the matter, and give sentence,' Judges xix. 30; so I wish all to consider this innovation, and give sentence of it. Can there be any clearer contradiction to the word, or bolder check to Christ, than when he saith, 'Drink ye all of this,' to say, 'Drink not all of this'? It is even as when God said, 'Ye shall die,' Gen. ii. 17; the devil said, 'You shall not die.' Shall we go now to a council, or a father, or a doctor to inquire whether this doctrine be like Christ's doctrine? I do verily think, that none here is so simple, but that he seeth that if anything can be contrary to Christ's speech, this is contrary to it; but this is only their detraction from the sacrament.

Now you shall hear their additions to the sacrament. Look upon their vestures, and their gestures, and their altars, and their pyx, and their incense, and their becks, and their nods, and their turnings, all this is more than Christ did; and therefore the prophet may say again, 'Who hath required this of you?' Isa. i. 12. Did Christ command you to do more than he did, and not do as he did? Therefore let them that have eyes to see, be thankful for their light, when they hear how blind they were whom God gave over to be seduced.

The fruit of this sacrament is noted in these words, ver. 24, 'which is broken for you,' 'which is shed for you;' that is, as Matthew interprets, Mat. xxvi. 28, 'shed for the remission of sins.' As all was made for us, so all which Christ spake, he spake for us; and all

which Christ did, he did for us; and all which Christ suffered, he suffered for us, 2 Cor. iv. 15, that the sins of men might be forgiven; and yet so few apprehend this benefit, that the way to heaven is called 'a narrow way,' Mat. vii. 13, as though all these pains did ransom but a small number, and certain order of men. All are not saved by Christ's death, but all which are saved, are saved by Christ's death; his death is sufficient to save all, as the sun is sufficient to lighten all; but if any man wink, the sun will not give him light, so if any man contemn and will not receive Christ, he will not thrust him into heaven, but every man shall have that which he chooseth, as David saith, Ps. cix. 17, 'Blessing to him that loveth blessing, and cursing to him that loveth cursing.' There wants not a hand to give, but a hand to take; 'I would,' saith Christ, 'but you would not,' Mat. xxiii. Stretch forth thy hand, and here is Christ's hand, which takes God's hand, and man's hand, and joins them together, and then the remission of sins is sealed. This is the will and testament of Christ.

He had no goods, nor land, nor money to give by his testament. A rich man, when he dieth, bestoweth the money which he hath gathered, and forgiveth many debts which are owing him; but Christ hath nothing to give, nor anything to forgive. The Lord of all had least of all, and he might say, like his servant Peter, Acts iii. 6, 'Gold and silver have I none,' no, not a grave to bury his body in; but the grave that Joseph made for himself served to bury Christ, Mark xvi. 46. His father was a carpenter, Mat. xiii. 55, but never made any house for himself; his mother lay in a stable for want of a chamber, Luke ii. 16; his disciple was fain to borrow twenty-pence for him of a fish, Mat. xvii. 27. Therefore, when one offered, 'Master, I will follow thee,' thinking to gain by his service, like retainers to noblemen, he replied unto him, 'The foxes have holes, and the fowls have nests, but the Son of man hath not a house to hide his head,' Luke ix. 57: shewing that the beasts and fowls were richer than he; therefore, when he had nothing to give, he gave himself, and when he had no debtors to forgive, he forgave his enemies, Luke xxiii. 34. What then? This is a poor and weak testament which gave nothing? Oh the goodliest testament that ever was made, for it bringeth to us the remission of sins! Is it such a matter to forgive sins? Yea, the greatest benefit in all the world; nay, a greater benefit than all the world, for thus it stood: thou hadst committed treason against the queen's person; thou art detected, apprehended, accused, convicted, and condemned upon it to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, and thy quarters to be set

up for a spectacle, like a carcase which thou hast seen hanged upon a gibbet, and the crows pecking upon it. What a horror and shaking to thy mind to think of that day, when all these torments, and shame, and fear shall surprise thee at once, which would make thee quake and tremble, if thou shouldst see but another so dismembered before thy face. Thou hast no comfort now but this: When I have suffered, I shall be free; before to-morrow at this time, all my pain will be past, though my shame continue, and my children be beggars. What grace, what favour, what mercy now to pardon thee all this, and save thy life, and set thee at liberty, as though thou hadst never offended! So I and thou, and every one here, had committed treason against the King of kings, and stood condemned for it, not to suffer, and then be free, like them which break the laws of men, but to suffer, and suffer, and ever to suffer all that the devils would heap upon us.

Then came the mercy of God; for Christ, which shed his blood, like an umpire between God and us, and said,[1] as Isaiah said to Hezekiah, 2 Kings xx. 5, 'Thou shalt not die, but live.' 'Loose him, and let him go,' for he is mine; so we were stayed, like the widow's son when he was carried to his grave, Luke vii. 15. This is the benefit of Christ's death, and this sacrament is the remembrance of it, and therefore, whensoever we receive it, this addition cometh with it, 'which is shed for the remission of sins,' Mat. xxvi. 28; our fault was so heinous and grievous, that no ransom could countervail it, unless God himself had suffered for us.

Being in this extremity, neither man nor angel offered his life for us, but the prince himself, which should have crucified us, came to be crucified of us, for us, that we might say with stedfast faith, 'I believe the remission of sin;' not the *satisfaction* of sins, but the *remission* of sins. Mark this distinction, against popish merits of works or penance. Christ hath satisfied, and not we; we are remitted, and not Christ; therefore we say in our confession, 'I believe the remission of sins, which I may call *the merciful article*, because it is the quintessence and sweetness of the twelve. Therefore, who but antichrist durst deprave it? If there be a satisfaction for our sins by our works, or by our pilgrimages, or by our masses, or by our penance, let Christ never be called a forgiver, but an exchanger, like the pope, which selleth his pardons.

Wretched creatures, which will not receive the Lord when he comes to the door! Christ saith, Take for nothing; and they say, No, we will not take, but buy. Vile, base, miserable men, disdain

[1] His words are not so, but the effect of his words.

to take the grace of God without satisfaction; but they will cope with the Lord, and give him so many pilgrimages, fast so many days, hear so many masses, and pay so many works for it, until they have done as much good as they have done evil. Our sins are infinite, and God is infinite; but our works are finite in number and measure: how can they answer, then, to that which exceeds number and measure? Therefore be content, with Joseph's brethren, Gen. xlii. 25, to take your money again, and say that you have corn for nothing, that is, you are saved for nothing; or else when you say, 'I believe the remission of sins,' you lie unto God, because you do not believe the remission of sin, but satisfaction for sins, like the papists.

It followeth, ver. 26, 'As often as ye shall eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye shall shew the Lord's death till he come.' Here are three invincible arguments against popish transubstantiation, like the three witnesses, Deut xvii. 6, under which every word doth stand.

We are said to eat *bread;* then it is not flesh, but bread. Secondly, we are said to *shew* the Lord's death; then it is but a show or representation of his death. Thirdly, it is said, *until* he come: if he be to come, then he is not come; if he be come, how can we say, *until* he come? The effect of this verse was shewed in these words, 'Do this in remembrance of me;' and to say, 'So oft as ye do this, ye shew my death,' is much at one. So that if you call this sacrament a show of Christ's death, as it is called here, then it is not Christ; or if you call it a remembrance of Christ, as it is called there, yet it is not Christ, but a show or remembrance of Christ; but this is such a show and remembrance, that the next verse saith, 'Whosoever receiveth it unworthily, is guilty of the body and blood of Christ.'

Will ye know who receiveth unworthily? In the nine-and-twentieth verse Paul saith, 'he discerneth not the Lord's body,' that is, which putteth no difference between this bread and other, but eateth, like a child, the meat which he knoweth not; and after, the bread seemeth stones to him, and the wine poison, because his conscience telleth him I have received unworthily, before I could say like David, Ps. cviii. 1, Ps. lvii. 7, 'My heart is prepared.' 'My sheep,' saith Christ, 'know my voice,' John x. 27. As they discern Christ's words, so they discern Christ's body; and therefore, so often as they come to the Lord's table, they seem to come into the Lord's presence; there they greet, and kiss, and embrace one another with affections which none can know but they that feel,

like John, which leaped in the womb so soon as Christ came near him, Luke i. 41.

Will ye know beside what it is to be 'guilty of the body and blood of Christ?' Even as Judas was guilty for betraying him, Mark xiv. 44, and Pilate for delivering him, Mat. xxvii. 15, and the Jews for crucifying him, Mark xv. 25, so they are guilty which receive this sacrament unworthily, as Pilate, and Caiaphas, and Judas were. If they be guilty of Christ's death, they are guilty of their own death too, as if they had committed two murders; and therefore Paul saith after, 1 Cor. xi. 30, that many of the Corinthians died only for the unworthy receiving of this sacrament. As the word is the savour of death to them which receive it unworthily, 2 Cor. ii. 16, so the sacrament is the savour of death to them which receive it unworthily. It never goeth into their mouth but they are traitors *ipso facto*, and may say to hell, This day have I taken possession of thee, because I am guilty of Christ's blood. Therefore it follows immediately, 'Let a man examine himself before he eat of this bread, or drink of this wine;' as if he should say, If he which receiveth this sacrament unworthily be guilty of Christ's death, like Judas which hanged himself; if these signs be received to salvation or damnation, like the word, the next lesson is to examine yourselves before you receive, lest you receive like the son of perdition, which swallowed the bread and the devil together, John xiii. 27. Therefore 'let a man examine himself, and so let him eat;' that is, let him examine first, and receive after; for if we should receive the bread of the earth reverently, 1 Sam. ix. 13, how should we receive the bread of heaven? When Jehonadab came to Jehu his chariot, he said, 'Is thy heart upright, as my heart is toward thee?' 2 Kings x. 15. So when we come to the Lord's table, he would have our hearts upright to him, as his heart is to us; for who feasteth his enemies and mockers? The golden ring sitteth highest at our table, James ii. 2, but the wedding garment sitteth highest at this table. It is safer eating with unwashed hands than with unwashed hearts. The Jews were taught to choose the lamb of the passover on the tenth day of the first month, in which month they came out of Egypt; and on the fourteenth day after, they were taught to eat him, Exod. xii. 3, 6; so they had four days' respite between the choosing and the killing, to prepare and sanctify themselves for the passover, which was a sign of the Lord's supper. This admonished them that the matter (now to be performed) was very weighty, and therefore they were deeply to consider it; for now was the action and sum of all salvation in hand-

ling. If they did prepare themselves so before they did receive the figure of this sacrament, how should we be prepared before we receive the sacrament itself? Therefore, as Josiah commanded the Levites to prepare the people, 2 Chron. xxxv. 6, so Paul adviseth the people to prepare themselves; that is, to examine whether they have faith, and love, and repentance, before they come to this feast. By this all may see, first, that Paul would have every layman skilful in the Scripture, that he be able to examine himself by it; for this admonition is not to them which minister the sacrament, but to all which receive the sacrament. And the rule by which we must examine ourselves is the law which we should obey; therefore if the rule be unknown, the examination must be undone. Our doctrine must be examined by the doctrine of the prophets and apostles, Acts xvii. 11; our prayers must be examined by the six petitions of Christ's prayer; our belief must be examined by the twelve articles of faith; our life must be examined by the ten commandments of the law, Exod. xx. 1, &c. Now he which hath this touchstone may try gold from copper; but he which hath it not takes one for the other; therefore before Paul's *examine*, 2 Cor. xiii. 5, you had need to learn Christ's *search:* John v. 39, 'Search the Scriptures,' and they will lighten you to search yourselves. This is the doctrine with which I will end, and the necessary point for which I chose this text, to teach you, if I could, that Christian art, how to examine yourselves.

Ver. 28. 'Let a man examine himself' before he eat. Here is, first, an examination; secondly, an examination of ourselves; thirdly, an examination before we come to the sacrament. Touching the first, here Paul saith, 'Examine yourselves;' but in 2 Cor. xiii. he doubleth his charge, 'Prove yourselves;' and again at next word, 'Examine yourselves;' as if he should say, This work must be done when it is done, because it is never thoroughly done; and therefore we must double our examination, as Paul doubleth his counsel. If a man suspect his enemy, he will try him with a question; if that will not search him, he will put forth another; if that be spied, he will move another, like one which putteth divers keys into a lock until it be open; so he which examineth must try and try, prove and prove, search and search; for the angel of darkness is like an angel of light, 2 Cor. xi. 14, and we have no way to discover him but that of John, 'Try the spirits,' 1 John iv. 1. God examineth with trials, the devil examineth with temptations, the world examineth with persecutions. We which are thus examined had need to examine too. If any man skill not what examining meaneth,

the very word *examine* is so pregnant, that it prompteth us how we should examine; for it signifieth to put ourselves unto the touch-stone, as if we would try gold from copper. Therefore one saith that examination is the eye of the soul, whereby she seeth herself, and her safety, and her danger, and her way which she walketh, and her pace which she holdeth, and the end to which she tendeth. She looks into her glass, and spieth every spot in her face, how all her graces are stained; then she takes the water of life and washeth her blots away. After she looks again, and beholdeth all her gifts; her faith, fear, love, patience, meekness, and marketh how every one do flourish or wither. If they fade and decay, that she feeleth a consumption; then she takes preservatives and restoratives of prayer, and counsel, and repentance, before the sickness grow. Thus every day she letteth down a bucket into her heart, to see what water it bringeth up, lest she should corrupt within, and perish suddenly.

To hear, and read, and pray, and fast, and communicate, is a work of many, but to examine those works is the fashion of few; and therefore Jeremiah complaineth, chap. viii. 6, 'No man saith, What have I done?' as if he should say, No man examineth himself. And therefore in all the Scripture it is said but of one that he feared all his works, Job ix. 28; as though he durst not think, nor speak, nor do anything before he had examined what it was, from whence it came, and whither it went; so the more precious treasure is deeper hid in the ground, Mat. xiii. 44.

The second point is to examine *ourselves*. Paul saith, 1 Thes. v. 21, 'Try all things;' much more should we try ourselves. The good sower doth sow his own ground, but the bad sower doth sow another man's ground, as the devil did, Mat. xiii. 25. The disciples of Christ, Mat. xxvi. 22, said, 'Master, is it I?' not 'Master, is it he?' The disciples of John asked, Luke iii. 10, 'Master, what shall we do?' not 'Master, what shall they do.' We must obey some an hear others, and admonish others, and love all, but examine ourselves. That which we apply unto others the apostle applieth unto ourselves; for when we speak of an examiner, we intend one which examineth others; when we speak of an accuser, we intend one which accuseth others; when we speak of a judge, we mean one that judgeth others; but the Scriptures crieth, Examine thyself, accuse thyself, judge thyself, 1 Cor. xi. 28–31; that is, be not curious to search a mote in thy brother's eye, but pull out the beam which is in thine own eye, Mat. vii. 3. This doth shew that they which sit in God's chair to judge others, commonly have greater faults themselves than they whom they use to judge; and therefore Christ

called their fault a beam, and the other's a mote. This made David say, Ps. iv. 4, 'Examine thy heart.' Thy heart is thine own heart; therefore thou must examine whether thou pray, whether thou watch, whether thou fast, and not whether he pray, whether he watch, whether he fast, as the pharisee examined the publican, Luke xviii. 11, lest thou have Peter's check, when he examined what John should do, John xxi. 22: Christ said, 'What is that to thee? Follow thou me.' Thou art a private man, and hast a private examination; therefore let thy question be, 'What have I done?' and make thy anatomy of thyself.

See, beloved, we may not believe ourselves before we have examined ourselves, for we are false-hearted; and the notablest cozener, that deceiveth most, for one time that he deceiveth others, ten times he deceiveth himself, because the flesh is a wily servant, and will lie, like Gehazi to his master, 2 Kings v. 25, 26, and face him that he hath not sinned when he cometh from sin. Therefore, as Elisha examined his servant, so the soul must examine her servant; that is, man must be jealous of himself, and take himself for a liar, for a flatterer, for a dissembler, until he be thoroughly acquainted with himself; for no man is so oft beguiled as by himself, by trusting his double heart, and taking his own word without further trial. If Paul had bid us examine others, we would have sifted them like Satan: 'Satan hath desired to sift thee,' saith Christ to Peter, Luke xxii. 31; so we have a desire to sift others, even as Peter, which was sifted of Satan, longed to sift John, and know what he should do, John xxi. 21, before he hearkened to his own charge. Therefore the help of examination is a needful preservative, although we were as sound as Peter. They which are suspected of a crime do not examine themselves, but are examined of others, lest they should be partial; but a Christian must examine himself of his crime, and be his own judge, his own accuser, and his own condemner, 1 Cor. xi. 31; for 'no man knoweth the spirit of a man but the spirit which is in man,' 1 Cor. ii. 11, which will condemn him if he be guilty, Rom. ii. 15, and tell him all that he hath done, and with what mind he did it, and what he deserveth for it. This is the private arraignment or close sessions, when conscience sits in her chair to examine, and accuse, and judge, and condemn herself, because she will not be condemned of God, 1 John iii. 21.

Thus holy men have kept the sessions at home, and made their hearts the foremen of the jury, and examined themselves as we examine others. The fear of the Lord stood at the door of their souls, to examine every thought before it went in, and at the door of their lips, to examine every word before it went out, whereby they escaped

a thousand sins which we commit, as though we had no other work. So thou shouldst sit in judgment of thyself, and call thy thoughts, and speeches, and actions to give in evidence against thee, whether thou be a Christian or an infidel, a son or a bastard, a servant or a rebel, a protestant or an hypocrite. If thou find not faith, nor fear, nor love, nor zeal, when thou examinest thyself, let no man make thee believe that thou art holy, that thou art sanctified, that thou art a Christian, that thou art a believer, that thou art a gospeller, because thou art worse than thou seemest thyself, for every man is partial to himself when he is most humbled.

Therefore, if my heart tell me that I do love God, whom shall I believe before myself? As Solomon saith, Prov. xxv. 3, 'No man can search the heart of the king,' so Paul saith, 1 Cor. ii. 11, 'No man knoweth the spirit of any man, but the spirit which is in man;' that is, no man feeleth the heart of man so well as himself; and yet himself, although he have lived with it ever since he was born, doth not know his own heart, unless he examine it narrowly; no more than he knoweth his own bones, or his veins, or his sinews, or his arteries, or his muscles, how many are in his body, or where they lie, or what they do.

This seems strange, that a man should not know his own heart; yet it is true that the best of all doth not know his own heart, though he hath dwelt with it from his mother's womb; for Christ saith to his disciples, even to his disciples, Luke ix. 55, 'You know not of what spirit you are;' that is, ye think better of yourselves than you are, and know not what the clock striketh within. There is a zeal without knowledge, and there is a knowledge without zeal; there is a faith without obedience, and there is an obedience without faith; there is a love without fear, and there is a fear without love, and both are hypocrites. Therefore, as Delilah searched where Samson's strength lay, Judges xvi. 6, so let every man search where his weakness lieth, and alway be filling the empty gap.

Now, this examination must go before us to the sacrament. Every meat worketh according as it is digested; and this meat worketh according as it is received. Therefore when Christ had taught what we should do in receiving the sacrament, now the apostle Paul sheweth what we should do before we receive the sacrament, 'Let a man examine himself.' But some will come before they examine themselves; and therefore as the priests of the law had authority to put by lame and blind sacrifices, so the ministers of the gospel have power to put by lame and blind receivers; and he which doth not so, giveth a sword into their hands to kill

themselves. If the pastor would use this examination duly, it were the only way to make every one examine himself, lest he be put by like non-proficients. As Jephthah discerned the Ephraimites, because when they should pronounce *Shibboleth*, they pronounced *Sibboleth;* so all which cannot pronounce *Christ*, that is, give reason of their faith, are to be thrust from this table.

There is a hearing, and a preparative before hearing, Luke viii. 18; there is a praying, and a preparative before praying, Eccles. v. 1; there is a receiving, and a preparative before receiving, which, if it be wanting, the receiver receiveth uncomfortably, the prayer prayeth idly, the hearer heareth unfruitfully, like those which do eat before hunger, and drink before thirst.

This preparative before hearing, and praying, and receiving, doth signify that there is a kind of physic in these three; for preparatives are ministered always before physic. And as the preparative which goeth before maketh way to the physic, or else it would do no good but hurt; so, unless examination go before the sacrament, we seal up the threatenings which are written against us, instead of the promises which are made unto us; for the sacrament is a seal, and therefore sealeth good or evil, as every other seal doth.

The preparative before we receive is to examine. As John was the forerunner of Christ, Luke i. 76; so examination is the forerunner of the sacrament, like the harbinger which rideth before to prepare the room. For if Job commanded his sons to sanctify themselves before they did come to his sacrifice, Job i. 5, how should we sanctify ourselves before we come to Christ's sacrament, wherein we are commanded to do as the Lord himself did, which instituted it? It is said that the chamber wherein Christ did institute this sacrament was trimmed, Luke xxii. 12; the chamber wherein the apostles received this sacrament was trimmed. If Judas's chamber, his inner chamber, had been trimmed so too, he had received this sacrament with as much comfort as the other disciples did; but because his heart was not trimmed, therefore he was the first which was condemned for the unworthy receiving of this sacrament.

Adam did not think that death had been in an apple, Gen. iii. 6; so you would not think that death should be in bread; but as a coal hath fire in it, besides the coal itself, which fire doth either warm or burn, so this meat hath another meat in it beside that which is seen, which doth either save or destroy; therefore he which cometh to this spiritual meat must examine whether he hath a spiritual mouth as well as a carnal mouth, or else shall receive no

more than he seeth, and that which he seeth not shall destroy him.

'No man,' saith Christ, 'putteth new wine into old vessels, lest the vessels break, and the wine leak,' Mark ii. 22. This wine is new wine, therefore put it into new vessels, holy vessels, sanctified vessels, or else it will leak forth, and break the vessel, and thou shalt have no more taste of it, than while the relish of bread is in thy mouth. When Christ cometh to our house, shall we not look whether our chambers be trimmed, as the chamber was trimmed against his coming to the passover? But how shall we trim it?

When a man takes an office, he examines his substance; when he takes a trade, he examineth his skill; when he goeth to fight, he examineth his strength; but these wants are no wants when he goeth to the sacrament. Wilt thou know now upon what articles thou must inquire at that time; that is, how thou shouldst examine thyself? As some prayer may be at all times, 1 Thes. v. 17, so some examination is at all times. Thus Job examined himself every day, nay, every hour, because he scanned all that he did, Job ix. 28.

But there is a special examination before the sacrament, because it is the bread which is received to salvation or damnation, 1 Cor. xi. 29; because it is the feast to which whosoever cometh without his wedding garment shall be cast into utter darkness, Mat. xxii. 11, because it is a seal which sealeth a curse or a blessing.

Therefore, having observed that examination is the necessariest lesson in Christianity, and less known than other, I have studied since my sermon to lay down three examinations which you should use at all times, and a special examination for the communicant's catechism, which leadeth immediately to the sacraments, as a guest is handed to the table. In the first examination, I will shew thee a rule how thou shalt try others' spirits, and then how thou shalt try thine own.

1. Thou shalt try strange spirits by their manner of speaking, plainly or doubtfully, boldly or fearfully; therefore we read that the oracles of the heathen had a double meaning, and that the false prophets never spake boldly, but where their patrons were ready to flesh them. 1 Kings xxii. 11.

2. By the proportion of faith; for every heresy is contrary to some article of our belief, as every sin is against some of the ten commandments.

3. By the event of their speeches; for they take no effect, as it is said in the 18th chapter of Deuteronomy, and therefore they are called false prophets.

4. By their fruits, Mat. vii. 16, for none of the false prophets were good men.

5. By their success; for if they be not of God, they will come to nought. As the Arians, and Manichees, and Pelagians are vanished, as if they had never been; so time shall wear out every doctrine that is not truth. This is thy rule to try others' spirits.

1. Thou shalt try thine own spirit by the motions that it hath to good or evil. For as a good stomach turneth all that it eats into good nutriment, and a bad stomach turneth all that it eats into raw humours, so likewise a good mind converteth all that it heareth, and all that it seeth, and all that it feeleth, into some profit; but a bad mind maketh a tentation of every thing; therefore it is said, Rom. xiv. 14, Titus i. 15, 'To the clean all things are clean;' and so, 'to the unclean nothing is clean;' that is, they defile themselves with everything.

2. Secondly, By the first cause, or preparation which thou hadst unto it; for whatsoever it be, thy thoughts will be where thou lovest, to verify that saying, 'Where a man's treasure is, there will be his heart;' for likely the beginning is a picture of the end, and the act is like the thought which set it a-work.

3. Thirdly, By the manner of the consolation in it, whether it be of knowledge or ignorance, whether it be constant or mutable, calm or boisterous, simple or mixed; for as a clear fountain yieldeth clear streams, so a pure heart hath pure joys.

4. Fourthly, Whether it bring to Christ, or take anything from him to thyself, like all the parts of popery, which mangle his honour either to angels, or to saints, or to pope, or to images. If it abide all these questions, and draw thee not from any good, then thou mayest say, It is from God; water the seed, O Lord, which thou hast sown. This is the fruit of thy first examination. In the second, by making thee discern whether another be a Christian, I will teach thee to know whether thyself be a Christian; which that thou mayest reach to, observe this direction, and thou shalt see of what side thou art.

It must needs be, that they which walk to contrary ends should go diverse ways; therefore there be more differences between the children of God and the children of the world, than there be between men and beasts.

1. First, They are distinguished in will; for the wicked strive to bring God's will to their will, like Balaam, Num. xxii. 19, which, when he had an answer, stayed for another; but the faithful labour

to bring their will to God's will, like Christ, which said, Mat. xxvi. 39, 'Not as I will, but as thou wilt.'

2. They are distinguished in faith. 'All men have not faith,' saith Paul, 2 Thes. iii. 2; but 'the just live by faith,' Rom. i. 17; as if he should say, The just believe, and the unjust believe not. The just believe, and apply that they believe to themselves; the wicked may believe like the devils, James ii. 19, but their faith is like the gadding hen, which carrieth her eggs to others, and never layeth at home; so they believe that others shall be saved, but not themselves.

3. They are distinguished in hope; for because the wicked hope not for any mends of God, therefore they never defer their reward; but if they do any good, they are trumpets of it themselves, for fear it should not be blazed enough, Mat. vi. 2; and therefore Christ said that the Pharisees had their reward already, because they were boasters of their works; and if they do not good, but evil, yet they would be magnified as much for evil, as others are for good. But the faithful are likened to handmaids which wait their reward, Ps. cxxiii. 2; their left hand seeth not when their right hand doth well, Mat. vi. 3; and they are afraid to take honour of men, for losing their honour with God, like John Baptist, which made his virtues meaner than they were, and debased himself, when he might have got a name above his Lord, John i. 21.

4. They are distinguished in obedience; therefore Christ teacheth us to judge men by their fruit, as an infallible rule, Mat. vii. 17; for the evil tree will bring forth evil fruit, and the good tree good fruit; and neither can change his property, although the evil fruit is sometimes beautiful, and the good fruit sometimes blasted. All slip; but in the wicked, one sin teacheth another, and in the faithful, one sin preventeth another.

5. They are distinguished in repentance; for the wicked do but weep for their sins past, but the godly purpose to sin no more. So Pharaoh, Exod. x. 16, Saul, 1 Sam. xv. 30, and Judas, Mat. xxvii. 3, said, 'I have sinned;' but Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, said, 'We will not sin,' Dan. iii. 18; therefore the heart of the godly is called a contrite heart, Ps. li. 17; but the heart of the wicked is called a heart that cannot repent, Rom. ii. 5. Besides, as Christ cast out a legion of devils at once, Luke viii. 30, so the godly would be purged of all their sins together; but the wicked never consent to leave all, but as Naaman said, 2 Kings v. 18, 'Let the Lord spare me in this,' so ever he excepteth one sin, which is his beloved

sin; like Herod, which reformed many things, and yet would not leave his brother's wife, Mat. xiv. 3.

6. They are distinguished in charity; for ye shall never see the wicked love their enemies; and therefore when the Pharisees could not love their enemies, they taught that men might hate their enemies; and Christ speaking of the publicans and sinners, exhorteth his disciples not to love like them, because they loved none but their friends, Mat. v. 43, Luke vi. 32.

7. They are distinguished in prayer; for the wicked cannot pray, therefore David saith, Ps. xiv. 4, 'they call not upon the Lord,' as if they had not the spirit of prayer, Zech. xii. 10, Rom. viii. 16; and therefore Christ calleth their prayer babbling, Mat. vi. 7, for they think not of God when they speak unto him.

8. They are distinguished in patience. No hypocrite can bear the cross, but saith, like Cain, Gen. iv. 13, 'It is heavier than I can suffer;' but Paul and Silas sung in prison, Acts xvi. 25, for a faithful man would have something to humble him, and rejoiceth to bear his master's marks, Gal. vi. 17, because the wounds of a lover are sweet.

9. They are distinguished in the use of adversity, for this is a proper and peculiar mark of God's children, to profit by affliction, and therefore we read not in all the punishments of the wicked, that one of them said like David, Ps. cxix. 71, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted.'

10. They are distinguished in humility, for the wicked are not humbled before the cross. Like Pharaoh, that never sorrowed but when he suffered, Exod. viii. 8, 15; Mat. xi. 29; but the apostles learned humility of their Master, before their persecution came.

11. They are distinguished in their judgment of the word, for to the wicked it seemeth the hardest, and simplest, and unpleasantest book that is, and therefore Paul saith, 1 Cor. i. 18, that 'it is foolishness unto them;' but to the godly it seemeth the wisest, and eloquentest, and sweetest, and easiest book of all others, as though God did suddenly bring the understanding of it to them, as Jacob said of his venison, Gen. xxvii. 20; according to that, 'He that will do his will shall know his doctrine,' John vii. 17.

12. They are distinguished in their judgment of God. The wicked are persuaded now and then of God's mercy for the present time while they feel it, as the Jews praised him always when he did as they would have him, Exod. xv. 20; but they cannot persuade themselves that God will be merciful to them still, like Job, which said, 'Though the Lord kill me, yet will I trust in him,' Job xiii.

15; therefore the hope of the righteous is called 'hope in death,' Prov. xiv. 32; xxiii. 18. Beside, if the wicked love God, it is but for his benefits, as Saul loved him for his kingdom, 1 Sam. x. 6. And this is always to be noted, that in the wicked the fear of hell is greater than is their hope of heaven; but in the faithful the hope of heaven is greater than their fear of hell.

13. They are distinguished in their delights, for the sport of the ungodly is folly, like Belshazzar's, Dan. v. 4; and therefore when they are sick or troubled, they never run to the word for comfort, as though God's promise pertained not to them; but to feasts, or tables, or tales, or music, as Saul did to the harp, 1 Sam. xvi. 23. But all the delights of the godly are like David's dance about the ark, 2 Sam. vi. 14, they are never merry but when they are doing well, nor at peace but when their prayers have overcome God, like Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 28.

14. They are distinguished in their opinions of death, for the faithful long to be dissolved, Philip. i. 23, Luke ii. 29; and although they might live ever in continual prosperity, yet they would not stay so long out of heaven. But the wicked would never be dissolved, because death comes always unto them like a gaoler, to hale unto prison, as Ahab said of Micaiah, that he never prophesied good to him, 1 Kings xxii. 8. Hereby a man shall know whether he have faith, for if he do believe the promises, he will be glad to receive them.

15. They are distinguished in their sense of sin. Wicked men feel the loathsomeness of their vices; but none but the faithful feel the defects of their righteousness. The natural man never complaineth of his good works, but vaunteth of them; but a godly man findeth fault with his prayers, and his alms, and his watches, like Isaiah, that said, his righteousness was like a menstruous cloth, Isa. lxiv. 6, Ps. xvi. 2. As Christ met the tempter in the wilderness, a place of prayer, and fasting, and meditation, Mat. iv. 1, 2, so a godly man meeteth the tempter in his prayer, and in his fasts, and in his meditations; that is, he finds some let, or spot, or want in all his devotions. Therefore, unless thy righteousness mislike thee as well as thy profaneness, know that thou art yet no further than the wicked.

16. They are distinguished in their ends, for the children of God propose the glory of God, and level all their thoughts, and speeches, and actions, as if they were messengers sent to carry him presents of honour.

Thus did David, when he said, Ps. ciii. 1, 'All that is within me

praise the Lord.' As though himself had rather been without praise than his Master; but the children of the world set up their own glory for their mark, like Nebuchadnezzar, which said, 'For the honour of my majesty,' Dan. iv. 30. Therefore they speak, and look, and walk, as if they did say to their tongue, and eyes, and feet, and apparel, as Saul said to Samuel, 1 Sam. xv. 30, 'Honour me before this people.'

17. Lastly, they are distinguished in perseverance, for the zeal of the wicked lasteth not, and therefore God saith, 'They are soon turned out of the way,' Exod. xxxii. 8; but the zeal of the faithful was represented by the fire of the temple, which never went out, Lev. vi. 12. By these differences thou mayest see how much thou dost differ from the wicked, or whether thou be of their band.

Then come to the third examination. As the devil tempteth thee to see what thou wilt do for him, so thou must tempt thyself, and get of thy soul what it would do for God, and what it would suffer for him, which hath suffered death for it. Therefore here we will set down certain interrogatories, whereof thou shalt examine it.

1. First, Whether thou have the heart of Joshua, Josh. xxiv. 15, to worship God as boldly as thou dost, though all the world did renounce him, and every one did mock thee, as they did Noah while he built the ark?

2. Whether thou wouldst not deny Christ, as Peter did, Mat. xxvi. 70, if thou wert in Peter's straits, and nothing to succour thee but policy?

3. Whether thou wouldst not steal, if thou didst see a booty as fit as Achan, Josh. vii. 21, which thou mightest catch up, and no man spy thee?

4. Whether thou wouldst refuse a bribe like Elisha, 2 Kings v. 16, if thou didst meet with one which were as willing and able to give it as Naaman?

5. Whether thou would not deceive, if thou were in such an office as the false steward, Luke xvi. 6, whose master referred all unto him, and knew not when he kept anything back?[1]

6. Whether thou wouldst not fulfil thy lust, as David did, 2 Sam. xi., if thou hadst his opportunity and allurement, and mightest do it without danger of the law, like a king, as David might?

7. Whether thou wouldst not tell a lie, as Abraham did, if it stood upon thy life, which made him twice dissemble that his wife was his sister, lest he should die for her beauty? Gen. xii. 13, xx. 2.

[1] Although this is a parable, yet it carrieth the signification of a history.

8. Finally, if it should be said unto thee, as the devil said to Christ, Mat. iv. 9, 'All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me;' that is no more, but if thou wilt sin, whether thou wouldst yield or no?

If thou have sinned thus and thus before, I will not say therefore the Lord will not hear thee; but David saith, Ps. lxvi. 18, 'If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear me;' that is, if for any cause a man purpose and carry a mind to sin when he is tempted, the Lord is so far from helping him, that he will stand like Baal, 1 Kings xiii. 26, as though he did not hear him; for he hath a traitor's mind as deep as any, which thinks for a dukedom, I would betray my prince, though he never play the traitor in his life. Thus you have heard how to try spirits, and how to discern a Christian from an hypocrite, and how to oppose your hearts, that ye may be sure to judge rightly what ye are.

Now we come to that examination, which is the epitome or abridgment of all these; for memory is short, and all are not of one strength; but some run, and some go, and some creep, and all do well, so long as they strive to perfection, Heb. vi. 1. The matters whereof principally the mind should be examined before the sacrament are these:

1. First, whether thou hast faith, not only to believe that Christ died, but that he died for thee; for as the Scripture calleth him *Redeemer*, Isa. lix. 20, so Job calleth him *his* Redeemer, Job xix. 25.

2. The second article is, whether thou be in charity; not whether thou love them which love thee, but whether thou love them that hate thee; for Christ commandeth us to love our enemies, Mat. v. 44.

3. The third article is, whether thou repent, not for thy open and gross sins, but for thy secret sins and petty sins, because Christ saith, Mat. xii. 36, that 'we must give account of every idle word.'

4. The fourth article is, whether thou resolve not to sin again for any cause, but to amend thy evil life, not when age cometh, or for a spurt, but to begin now, and last till death; for Christ is Alpha and Omega, both the beginning and the end, Rev. xxii. 13; as well in our living as in our being, which hath made no promise to them which begin, but to them which persevere, Rev. ii. 11.

5. The last article is, whether thou canst find in thy heart to die for Christ, as Christ died for thee. We are bid not only to follow him, but to bear his cross; and therefore we are called servants, to shew how we should obey, Luke xii. 38; and we are called soldiers, to shew how we should suffer, 2 Tim. ii. 3.

These are the receiver's articles, whereof his conscience must be examined before he receive this sacrament; happy is he which can say, All these have I kept, Mat. xix. 20; for the dove, Gen. viii. 11, was not so welcome to Noah as this man is to Christ. But if thou find not these affections within, but a nest of vices, leave thine offering at the altar, Mat. v. 24, and return to thine examination again, for thou art not a fit guest to sup with the Lord, until thou have on this wedding garment, Mat. xxii. 11.

How is it then that some regard their other garments more than this? Paul saith, Examine yourselves, and they examine their apparel; if they have new clothes, in the country, then they are ready to receive. I have known many kept from the sacrament a whole year together by their masters, for nothing but for want of a new suit to set them forth with their fellows!

Others respect whether it be a fair day, that they may walk after service; making that day upon which they receive like a scholar's Thursday, which he loves better than all the days in the week, only because it is his play day. Thus like the Jews, 'they sit down to eat, and rise up to play;' that as Christ calleth the Pharisees' prayer 'babbling,' Mat. vi. 7, so their receiving may be called dallying.

When they have the sacrament in their belly, they think that all is well, as Micah, when he had a Levite in his house, thought that God loved him, Judges xvii. 13; but as the Levite did not profit him, because he received nothing but the Levite, so the bread and wine do them no good, because they receive nothing but bread and wine, for want of faith. Marvel not then if you have not felt that comfort after the sacrament which you looked for, for it is comfortable to none but to them which prepare their hearts, and examine themselves before, because it is not the mouth but the heart which receiveth comfort.

Now it may be that the most which are here have brought a mouth and not a heart; these go away from the sacrament to despite Christ, as Judas went from the sacrament to betray him, John xiii. 30.

The other go away like one which had received a cheerful countenance of the prince; all his thoughts are joy, and the countenance of the prince is still in his eye. As he which hath eaten sweet meat hath a sweet breath, so they which have eaten Christ, all their sayings and doings are sweet, like a perfume to men, and incense to God; their peace of conscience, and joy of heart, and desire to do good, will tell them whether they have received bare signs, or the thing signified.

Every one which receiveth this sacrament shall feel himself better after it, like the apostles; or else he shall find himself worse after it, like Judas. Hereby ye shall know whether ye have received like the apostles, or like Judas. Thus we have ended the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Now if you cannot remember all that I have said, yet remember the text, that is, Examine yourselves before you receive this sacrament hereafter.

# THE EXAMINATION OF USURY.

IN TWO SERMONS.

# TO THE READER.

HERE thou hast the sermons which have been often desired, because of the matter fit for the city. One saith that he would never speak to usurers and bribe-mongers but when they be upon their death-beds; for he which liveth by sin, resolveth to sin that he may live; but when he goeth to hanging, Judas himself will say, 'I have sinned,' Mat. xxvii. 4. If I speak not to usurers upon their death-bed, yet I speak to usurers which shall lie on their death-bed. Three things do give me hope: one is, that all hearts are in the hands of God, to call them at what hour he list, and therefore Saul may become an apostle.

The next is, that the third crow doth waken more than the former; and therefore, after the crowing of other, this crow may happily be heard.

The last is, that there is no sin but some men have been reclaimed from it, Acts ix. 11, and so may usurers from their sin.

Therefore go, my book, like David against Goliath, 1 Sam. xvii. 51, and fight the Lord's battles against usurers. The Lord give that success to his doctrines in these leaves, that it may consume usurers, as Joshua drove out the Canaanites before him! Josh. v. 1. If I could take but this one weed out of the Londoners' garden, I were answered for my health and my strength spent amongst them. Read with thy best mind, and thou shalt profit more.

Thine,

H. S.

# THE EXAMINATION OF USURY.

## THE FIRST SERMON.

*Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle? who shall rest in thine holy mountain? He that giveth not his money to usury.*—Ps. XV. 1, 5.

THESE two verses must now be considered together, because one is the question, and the other is the answer. David demands who shall come to heaven; and God tells him that usurers shall not come thither; as if he should say, they go to hell. Therefore, as Paul taught Timothy to warn them which are rich, 1 Tim. vi. 17, as though they had more need to be warned than other; so this sentence seemeth to be penned for the warning of the rich, because it strikes upon the rich man's vice.

I have spoken of bribery and simony, and now I must speak of their sister usury. Many times I have thought to speak of this theme, but the arguments which are alleged for it have made me doubtful what to say in it, because it hath gone, as it were, under protection. At last you see it falleth into my text, and therefore now I cannot baulk it any longer. Therefore, if any here have favoured this occupation before, let him now submit his thoughts to God's thoughts, for I will allege nothing against it but that which is built upon the rock.

Usury is the sin which God will try now whether you love better than his word; that is, whether you will leave it if he forbid it; for if he flatly forbid it, and yet you will fully retain it, then you love usury better than God's word. Therefore one saith well, that our usurers are heretics, because after many admonitions yet they maintain their error, and persist in it obstinately, as papists do in popery. For this cause I am glad that I have an occasion to grapple

with this sin, where it hath made so many spoils, and where it hath so many patrons; for it is said that there be more of this profession in this city, than there be in all the land beside. There be certain sins which are like an unreasonable enemy, which will not be reconciled to death; and this is one of those everlasting sins which will live and die with a man. For when he hath resigned his pride, and his envy, and his lust, yet usury remaineth with him, and he saith, as Naaman said, 2 Kings v. 18, 'Let the Lord be merciful unto me in this;' let me have a dispensation for this; as though this were a necessary sin, and he could not live without it. There are three sins which are accounted no sins, and yet they do more hurt than all their fellows; and those are, bribery, non-residence, and usury. These three, because they are gainful, are turned from sins to occupations.

How many of this city, for all they are usurers, yet would be counted honest men, and would fain have usury esteemed as a trade! whereas, if it were not so gainful, it would be counted as great a sin as any other, and so it is accounted of all but them which live by it. This is the nature of pleasure and profit, to make sins seem no sins, if we gain anything by them; but the more gainful a sin is, the more dangerous it is; and the more gainful usury is, the more dangerous it is. I will speak the more of it, because haply you shall not hear of this matter again.

First, I will define what usury is; secondly, I will shew you what usury doth signify; thirdly, I will shew the unlawfulness of it; fourthly, I will shew the kinds of it; fifthly, I will shew the arguments which are alleged for it; sixthly, I will shew the punishment of it; seventhly, I will shew you what opinion we should hold of them which do not lend upon usury, but borrow upon usury; lastly, I will shew you what they should do which have got their riches by usury.

Touching the first, usury is that gain which is gotten by lending, for the use of a thing which a man lendeth, covenanting before with the borrower to receive more than was borrowed; and therefore one calls the usurer a legal thief, because before he steal, he tells the party how much he will steal, as though he stole by the law. This word *more* comes in like a sixth finger, which makes a monster, because it is more than should be. Another defining usury, calleth it the contrary to charity; for Paul saith, 'Love seeketh not her own,' but usury seeketh another's that is not her own; therefore usury is far from love; but 'God is love,' saith John, 1 John iv. 8, therefore usury is far from God too.

Now all the commandments of God are fulfilled by love, which Christ noteth, when he draweth all the commandments to one commandment, which is, 'Love God above all things, and thy neighbour as thyself,' Mat. xxii. 37; as if he should say, he which loveth God will keep all the commandments which respect God; and he which loveth his neighbour, will respect all the commandments which respect his neighbour; therefore to maintain love, God forbiddeth all things which hinder this love; and amongst the rest, he forbiddeth usury, as one of her deadliest enemies. For a man cannot love and be an usurer, because usury is a kind of cruelty, and a kind of extortion, and a kind of persecution; and therefore the want of love doth make usurers; for if there were love there would be no usury, no deceit, no extortion, no slandering, no revenging, no oppression; but we should live in peace, and joy, and contentment, like the angels. Whereby you see that all our sins are against ourselves; for if there were no deceit, we should not be deceived; if there were no slander, then we should not be slandered; if there were no envy, then we should not be envied; if there were no extortion, then we should not be injured; if there were no usury, then we should not be oppressed. Therefore God's law had been better for us than our own law; for if his law did stand, then we should not be deceived, nor slandered, nor envied, nor injured, nor oppressed. God hath commanded every man to lend freely, Luke vi. 35; and who would not borrow freely? Therefore they which brought in usury, brought in a law against themselves.

The first usurers which we read of were the Jews, which were forbidden to be usurers; yet for want of faith and love, Ezekiel and Nehemiah do shew how the Jews, even the Jews, which received this law from God himself, did swerve from it as they did from the rest, Ezek. xviii. 13, Neh. v. 5. First, they did lend upon usury to strangers; after they began to lend upon usury to their brethren; and now there be no such usurers upon earth as the Jews, which were forbidden to be usurers; whereby you may see how the malice of man hath turned malice into cruelty, Deut. xv. 10. For whereas lending was commanded for the benefit of men, usury hath turned it to the undoing of men; for they take when they seem to give, they hurt when they seem to help, they damage when they seem to advantage; therefore it is well noted that usury hath her name of *biting*. And she may well signify biting, for many have not only been bitten by it, but devoured by it; that is, consumed all that they have. Therefore as the apostle saith, Gal. v. 15, 'If you bite one another, take heed ye be not devoured one of another.' So I

may say, if you be usurers one to another, take heed you be not devoured one of another, for usurers are biters.

As the name of the devil doth declare what an enemy he is, so the name of usury doth declare what an enemy she is. That you may know usury for a biter, her name doth signify *biting* (*neshec*). If there were one biting usury and another healing usury, then usury should have two names, one of biting and another of healing; but all usury signifieth biting, to shew that all usury is unlawful.

Now, you have heard what usury is, and of what it is derived; you shall hear the unlawfulness of it.

First, It is against the law of charity, because charity biddeth us to give every man his own, and to require no more than our own; but usury requireth more than our own, and gives not to other their own. Charity rejoiceth to communicate her goods to other, and usury rejoiceth to gather other men's goods to herself.

Secondly, It is against the law of nations; for every nation hath some law against usury, and some restraints against usurers, as you shall hear when we speak of the punishment.

Thirdly, As it is against the law of nations, so it is against the law of nature; that is, the natural compassion which should be amongst men. You see a river when it goeth by an empty place, it will not pass until it hath filled that empty place, and then it goeth forward to another empty place, and filleth it; and so to another place, and filleth it; always filling the places which are empty. So should we; the rich should fill the poor, the full should fill the hungry, they which abound should fill them which want; for the rich are but God's almoners, and their riches are committed to them of God, to distribute and do good, as God doth himself. As the water is charitable after a sort, so is the air; for it goeth into empty places too, and filleth them as the water doth. Nature cannot abide that any place should be empty; and therefore the air, though it be a light body, and so naturally ascendeth upward, yet rather than any place in the earth should be empty, the air will descend (as it were) from his throne, and go into caves, into dens, and into dungeons, to fill them. If the rich were so good to their empty brethren as the air and water are to other empty things; as there is no empty place in the world, so there should be no empty person in the world; that is, the rich in Israel would fill the poor in Israel. But the rich make the poor to fill them; for usurers feed upon the poor, even as great fishes devour the small. Therefore he which said, 'Let there not be a beggar in Israel,' Deut. xv. 4, said too, Let there not be an usurer in Israel. For if there be usurers in Israel there will be

beggars in Israel; for usurers make beggars, even as lawyers make quarrellers.

Fourthly, It is against the law of God. First, It is forbidden in Exod. xxii. 25, where it is said, 'If thou lend money unto my people, that is, to the poor with thee, thou shalt not oppress them with usury.' Here is usury called oppression; therefore if oppression be a sin, usury is a sin too. Secondly, It is forbidden, Lev. xxv. 37, where it is said, 'Thou shalt not give thy money to usury, nor lend thy victuals for increase.' Here you may see that men may be usurers of victuals and other things, as well as of money. Thirdly, It is forbidden in Deut. xxiii. 19, where it is said, 'Thou shalt not lend unto thy brother upon usury.' And lest you should say that he meaneth but one kind of usury, he sheweth that he meaneth all kinds of usury; for after, in the 19th verse he saith, 'As usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of corn, or usury of anything that is given to usury;' because some are no usurers of money, but some are usurers of victuals, some are usurers of cloth, some are usurers of corn, some are usurers of wine, some are usurers of oil, and some of one thing, and some of another; and none would be counted usurers but they which lend money unto usury; therefore God forbiddeth so precisely usury of anything, shewing that all usury is unlawful.

It is a miserable occupation to live by sin, and a great comfort to a man when he looketh upon his gold and silver, and his heart telleth him, All this is well gotten; and when he lieth upon his death-bed, and must leave all to his children, he can say unto them, I leave you mine own; but the usurer cannot say, I leave you mine own, but I leave you other men's; therefore the usurer can never die in peace, because if he die before he make restitution, he dieth in his sin.

When Christ raised Lazarus from death, after he had lain four days in the grave, he wept so over his sepulchre, that the standers about said one to another, 'See how he loved him!' John xi. 36. As it may be said of Christ, See how he loveth us! so it should be said of us, See how they love one another! For Christ said to his disciples, John xv. 12, 'Love one another, as I have loved you;' but it may be said of the usurer, See how he hateth others and loveth himself! For when he saith that he lendeth for compassion, he meaneth for compassion of himself, that he may gain by his pity. The usurer loveth the borrower as the ivy loveth the oak; the ivy loveth the oak to grow up by it, so the usurer loveth the borrower to grow rich by him. The ivy claspeth the oak like a lover, but it

claspeth out all the juice and sap, that the oak cannot thrive after it; so the usurer lendeth like a friend, but he covenanteth like an enemy; for he claspeth the borrower with such bonds, that ever after he diminisheth as fast as the usurer increaseth.

Christ expounding the commandment which forbiddeth to steal, saith, 'lend freely;'[1] shewing that usury, because she lendeth not freely, is a kind of theft, and the usurers a kind of thieves, or else this exposition were not right. Therefore Zaccheus, Luke xix. 8, as though he had stolen other men's goods, when he began to repent, he restored them again fourfold, even as thieves are enjoined to restore fourfold for that which they have stolen;[2] so Zaccheus restored fourfold, as though he had stolen. It seemeth that Zaccheus was no great thief, because he restored fourfold for all that he had gotten wrongfully; for he got but the fourth part of his goods wrongfully at the most, or else he could not have restored fourfold again. But now, if some should restore fourfold for all that they have gotten wrongfully, they should restore more than they have, because all which usurers get, they get wrongfully; for their occupation is a sin, Exod. xxii.; and therefore one saith, because they cannot restore fourfold here, they shall suffer an hundredfold hereafter.

Amaziah is forbidden to strengthen himself with the armies of Israel, only because Israel had offended God, 2 Chron. xxv. If Amaziah might not join the armies of Israel with his armies to strengthen them, darest thou join the goods of the poor with thy goods to enrich thee? When God set Adam his work, he said, 'In the sweat of thy brows thou shalt live,' Gen iii. 19; not in the sweat of *his* brows, but in the sweat of *thy* brows; but the usurer liveth in the sweat of *his* brows, and *her* brows, that is, by the pains and cares, and labours of another; for he taketh no pains himself, but only expecteth the time when his interest will come in; like the belly, which doth no work, and yet eateth all the meat.

When God had finished his creation, he said unto man, and unto beasts, and unto fishes, 'Increase and multiply,' Gen. i. 28; but he never said unto money, Increase and multiply, because it is a dead thing which hath no seed, and therefore is not fit to engender. Therefore he which saith to his money, Increase and multiply, begetteth a monstrous birth, like Anah, which devised a creature which God had not created before, Gen. xxxvi. 24. Christ saith to his disciples, 'If you love but them which love you, what are

[1] Understand that his sermon upon the mount is an exposition of the commandments, or else the text will not seem to imply this. [2] In some kind of theft.

you better than the publicans? for they love their brethren,' Mat. v. 46; so may I say, If you will lend to none but to them which will pay you usury for it, what are you better than the Jews? for the Jews would lend for usury; and if you be no better than the Jews, then you shall speed no better than they. For as Christ said, Mat. v. 20, 'Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, your reward shall not exceed the reward of the Pharisees;' so except your charity do exceed the charity of the Jews, your reward shall not exceed the reward of the Jews. All this doth shew, that the usurer is like Esau, of whom God said, 'Esau have I hated,' Mal. i. 3. Now in Ps. cxii., you shall see who is like Jacob, of whom God saith, 'Jacob have I loved;' for there David saith, 'A good man is merciful and lendeth;' and straight upon it he setteth this crown, 'He shall never be moved, but be had in perpetual remembrance;' as if he should say, This is the good man's usury, this is his increase, even a good name and everlasting joy. Again, in Exod. xxiii. it is said, 'Lend unto him which wanteth without usury, that the Lord may bless thee;' as if he should say, Let the Lord pay the increase, fear not to be losers by doing good, for God hath given his word to requite it himself. As he saith to them which were afraid to pay tithes and offer sacrifice, 'Try me if I will not pour down a blessing upon you,' Mal. iii. 10, Deut. xv. 10; so he seemeth to say to them which are afraid to lend, Try me if I will not pour down a blessing upon you. Whom will you trust, if you do not trust your Creator, your Father, your Redeemer, your Preserver, and your Saviour?

Now you have heard the unlawfulness of usury, you shall hear how many kinds there be of it. As other crafts are called mysteries, so I may fitly call it the mystery of usury; for they have devised more sorts of usury than there be tricks at cards; I cannot reckon half, and I am afraid to shew you all, lest I should teach you to be usurers while I dissuade you from usury. Yet I will bring forth some; and the same reasons which are alleged against these shall condemn all the rest.

Some will not take usury, but they will have the use of your pasture, or your land, or your orchard, or your team, or your kine, until you pay the money again, which in that time will grow to a greater gain to the usurer, and a greater loss to the borrower, than if he had paid more money than other usurers are wont to take.

Some will not take usury, but they will take plate, and vessel, and tapestry, and bedding, and other household stuff, to use and wear until their money comes home, which will lose more in wear-

ing than the interest of the money would come to. This usury is forbidden in the second of Amos, where God complaineth, saying, 'They lie down upon the clothes which are laid to pledge;' shewing that we should not lie down upon such clothes, that is, we should not use or wear the thing which is laid to pledge.

Some will take no usury, but they will take a pawn, which is better than the money which they lend; and then they will covenant, that if he bring not the money again by such a day, he forfeiteth his pawn; which day the usurer knoweth that the poor man is not able to keep, and so he keepeth the pawn for his money, which is worth twice his money. This usury is forbidden in Lev. xxv., where it is said, 'Thou shalt not take usury or vantage.' As if he should say, Thou shalt not take the forfeiture, for then thou takest vantage, when thou takest more than thou lendest.

Some will not take usury, but they will buy something at a small price, and then covenant with the borrower that he buy the same again of the same price at such a day; which day the usurer knoweth that the borrower is not able to keep, and so he getteth for a little that which the other might have sold for much more. This usury is condemned in 1 Thes. iv. 6, where it is said, 'Let no man defraud or circumvent his brethren in anything.'

Some will not take usury, but they will lend their money to occupiers, upon condition to be partakers in their gains, but not in their losses. So one takes all the pains, and abideth all the venture, and the other that taketh no pains reapeth half the profit. This usury is forbidden in 2 Thes. iii. 10, where it is said, 'He which will not work, let him not eat.'

Some will not take usury, but if he be a labourer, or a mason, or a carpenter, which borroweth of him, he will covenant with him for so many days' work; he shall labour with him so many days, or so many weeks, for no money, but the loan of money. This usury is condemned in Luke x. 7, where it is said, 'The labourer is worthy of his hire.'

Some will not take usury, but if you have not present money to pay for their wares, they will set a high price on them for the forbearing of the time; and so they do not only sell their wares, but they sell time too, that is, they do not only sell their own, but they sell God's own. Therefore, one saith of these, When he selleth the day, he selleth the light; and when he selleth the night, he selleth rest; therefore, when he would have the light of heaven, and the rest of paradise, it shall be said unto him, that he hath sold both already: for he sold light when he sold the day, and he sold rest

when he sold the night; and therefore now he can have neither light nor rest. Hereafter let not the Londoners say that they give time, but that they sell time.

There be other usurers which will not lend themselves, but give leave to their wives, and they play like hucksters, that is, every month a penny for a shilling, which is one hundred for another in the year.

But that I was informed of them since this sermon was preached, I had left out our capital usurers, which will not lend any money, because they dare not require so much gain as they would have; but if you would borrow a hundred pound, they will give you wares worth threescore pound, and you shall answer them an hundred pound for it. These are the usurers-general, which lurk about the city like rats, and weasels, and fumers,[1] of whom may be said the same which is said of the devils, 1 Peter v. 8, 'They seek whom they may devour.'

There be other cousins to usurers which are not counted usurers; such as take money for that which they should give freely; such as take as much for a counterfeit, as for the best; such as take a fee of a client, and do him no pleasure; such as take money for masses, and dirges, and trentals, and pardons, and such like drugs, which do no more good than fire out of the chimney. This is a kind of usury, and deceit besides, which one day they will cast away, as Judas did his thirty pence.

Now you have heard of the kinds of usury, you shall hear the arguments which are devised for usury.

Sin is never complete until it be excused; this is the vantage which the devil getteth by every sin. Whensoever he can fasten any temptation upon us, we give him a sin for it, and an excuse to boot, as Adam our father did. First he sinned, and then he excused, Gen. iii. 12; so first we sin, and then we excuse; first an usurer, and then an excuser; therefore, every usurer will defend usury with his tongue, though he condemn it with his conscience. If the image-makers of Ephesus had not lived by images, they would have spoken for images no more than the rest; for none stood for images but the image-makers, Acts xix. 25; so if the usurers did not live by usury, they should speak for usury no more than the rest; for none stand for usury but usurers.

It is an easy matter (if a man be disposed) to speak something for every vice; and some defend the stews, some defend non-residency, some defend swearing *by my faith*, some defend bowling

[1] That is, 'pole-cats.'—Ed.

upon the Sabbath, and some defend usury; but, 'Will you plead for Baal?' saith Joash, Judges vi. 31; that is, will you plead for sin, which will plead against you? A sin is sin when it is defended; nay, a sin is two sins when it is defended; for, 'He that breaketh one of the least commandments' (saith Christ), 'and teacheth others to do so, is the least in the kingdom of heaven,' Mat. v. 19. A squire of low degree is a squire of no degree; so the least in the kingdom of heaven is none of the kingdom of heaven. Who then is the least in the kingdom of heaven? Not he which breaketh the least of the commandments, but he which teacheth others to do so; that is, he which by defending, and excusing, and mincing, and extenuating his sin, encourageth others to sin too.

To defend usury, they distinguish upon it, as they distinguish of lying. As they say, there is a pernicious lie, and an officious lie, and a merry lie, and a godly lie; so they say, there is a merchant's usury, and the stranger's usury, and the widow's usury, and the orphan's usury, and the poor man's usury, and the biting usury, and the charitable usury, and the necessary usury. As God said, 'Ye shall die;' and the woman said, 'Peradventure ye shall die;' and the serpent said, 'Ye shall not die;' so there be three opinions of usury. Some say, like God, 'Thou shalt die;' they think that usury is utterly unlawful, because God hath utterly forbidden it: some say like to the woman, 'Peradventure thou shalt die;' they doubt whether usury be utterly unlawful or no, because it is so much tolerated; some say like the serpent, 'Thou shalt not die;' they think that usury is lawful, because it is gainful, as Saul thought that the idolaters' beasts should not be killed, because they were fat, 1 Sam. xv. 9. But as he was commanded to kill the fat beasts as well as the lean beasts; even so we are commanded to kill fat sins, as well as lean sins; gainful sins, as well as prodigal sins.

They which plead for usury object these arguments: First, they say, God doth allow some kind of usury; for in Deut. xxiii. it is said, 'Of a stranger thou mayest take usury.' I perceive no scriptures speaketh for usurers. 'Of a stranger,' saith God, 'thou mayest take usury;' but thou takest usury of thy brother; therefore this condemneth thee, because thou usest thy brother like a stranger. Here *stranger* doth signify the Jews' enemies, whom they were commanded to destroy; therefore mark how much this maketh against usury, which they object for usury. God doth not license the Jews to take usury of any but their enemies, whom they might kill. They might not be usurers unto any, but to them of whom they might be destroyers,

whom they might slay; of them only they might take usury; shewing that usury is a kind of punishment, and such a kind of punishment as, if we are to kill a man, it were a very fit punishment for him; and therefore the Jews might take usury of none but them whom they might kill. I hope usurers will allege this Scripture no more.

Secondly, They say they lend for compassion, and so make usury a work of charity. This were charity: not to be partakers in our gains, but to be partakers in our losses; but usurers will be partakers in our gains, but not in our losses; nay, though we lose, yet they will gain. Is this charity? It is usurers' charity.

Thirdly, They say, If he gain, and I gain too, is not this well? may he not consider my friendship, and be thankful? Yes, he may be thankful; but no man is bound to be thankful, but when he hath received a good turn, then he is tried whether he will be thankful or no; and if he requite thy courtesy, then he is thankful; but if thou bind him to requite it, then thou art covetous.

Fourthly, They say, Usury is necessary for orphans, and widows, and strangers, which have no other way to get their living, and therefore some usury must be tolerated. If usury be necessary for us, how did the Jews without it? Did God think it good for the state of their commonweal to be without usurers; and is it good for the state of our commonweal to have usurers? This is wisdom against God.

Fifthly, They say, If I may not gain by the money which I lend, I will lend no more, but keep my money to myself. Nay, that is as bad, to keep thy money from them which need, as to lend thy money for usury; for Christ saith, Mat. v. 42, 'From him which borroweth, turn not away thy face;' therefore thou art bound to lend. As he hath a curse in Prov. xi., which keepeth his corn when he should sell it unto them which hunger, so he hath a curse in Ezek. xviii., which keepeth his money when he should lend it unto them which want.

Sixthly, They say, Because usury comes of biting, the biting usury is only forbidden, and none but the biting usury. Why, then, all usury is forbidden, for all usury cometh of biting; so the wise God hath given it a name to condemn it.

Lastly, they allege the law of the land for it, and say, The queen's statute doth allow us to take upon usury ten in the hundred. These are like the Jews, John xix. 7, which said, 'We have a law, and by our law he shall die.' When they could not say, By God's law he shall die, then they say, By our law he shall die; so when they

cannot say, By God's law we may take usury, they say, By man's law we may take usury. This is the poorest defence of all the rest; for if God's law forbid thee, can any law of man excuse thee? As it would not serve Adam to say, 'The woman bade me,' Gen. iii., so it will not serve the usurer to say, The law doth license me; for though peradventure our law doth tolerate more than should be tolerated, yet I would have you know that our law doth not allow ten in the hundred, nor five in the hundred, nor one in the hundred, nor any usury at all; but there is a restraint in our law, that no usurer take *above* ten in the hundred. It doth not allow ten in the hundred, but punisheth that tyrant which exacteth above ten in the hundred. It is much like that toleration which we read of divorces: Mat. xix. 8, 'For the hardness of men's hearts,' Christ saith, that Moses did suffer the man and wife to part asunder; so for the hardness of men's hearts our Moses, our prince, is fain to suffer as it were a kind of usury, because otherwise no man would lend.

These are the best excuses which our usurers have to plead for themselves against they come before the tribunal seat of God; and if their reasons will not stand before men, nor their own conscience, how will they stand before the Lord? and yet he which speaketh to these, maketh himself a mock. Christ preached many sermons, and never was scorned at any; but when he preached against covetousness, then it is said that he was mocked, Luke xvi. 14, shewing that these kind of men are most incorrigible, and wedded to their sin, till death make them part. Yet (for their greater condemnation) we are commanded to speak to them which will not hear, Ezek. ii. 5, of which number is every reader of this sermon, if he be an usurer after.

Now you long to hear what a usurer is like. To what shall I liken this generation? They are like a butler's box; for as all the counters at last come to the butler, so all the money at last cometh to the usurer; ten after ten, and ten after ten, and ten to ten, till at last he receive not only ten for an hundred, but an hundred for ten. This is the only difference, that the butler can receive no more than he delivered, but the usurer receiveth more than he delivereth. They are even like a moth that eateth a hole in cloth, so usury eateth a hole in silver. If you have a piece of silver which is as much as an hundred pounds, in one year usury will eat a hole in it as big as ten pounds; in two years, she will eat a hole as big as twenty pounds; in three years, she will eat a hole as big as thirty pounds. Nay, now they say he is but a bad husband which

cannot eat a hole as big as fifty pounds in a year, that is, which cannot gain half in half. How many holes have their moths eaten in poor men's garments! They are like non-residents, that is, such bad members that no man speaketh for but themselves. As no man standeth for non-residency but he which is a non-resident, or he which will be a non-resident, so no man standeth for usury but he which is an usurer, or he which would be an usurer.

They are like Jezebel, which said, 'Let me alone, I have a way,' 1 Kings xxi. 7. If there be no way to live, saith the false steward, Luke xvi. 4, I know what to do, I will deceive. So if there be no way to live, saith the usurer, I know what to do, I will oppress. If I cannot live by buying, nor by selling, nor by flattering, nor by labouring, I will live by oppression. But as one in his comment speaks to the false steward, Thou sayest, I know what to do; but dost thou know what thou shalt suffer? so I say to usurers, You say you know what to do; but do you know what ye shall suffer? Indeed, he knoweth not what to do, which knoweth not to do well; and therefore Christ said of his persecutors, Luke xxiii. 34, 'that they knew not what they did.' Here I will end the first day's examination. Now I may conclude with Paul, 1 Cor. vii. 10, 'I have not spoken, but the Lord;' and therefore, as the Lord said unto Saul, Acts ix. 5, 2 Cor. xi. 8, that he persecuted him, so they which resist this doctrine do condemn him, and not me.

# THE EXAMINATION OF USURY.

## THE SECOND SERMON.

It remaineth that we speak of the usurer's punishment. Then what may be thought of them which do not take usury, but give usury. Lastly, what they should do which have got their riches by usury.

To begin with the punishment; not only God's law, but even the canon law doth so condemn usury, that first it doth excommunicate him from the church, as though he had no communion with saints.

Secondly, It doth detain him from the sacraments, as though he had no communion with Christ.

Thirdly, It doth deprive him of his sepulchre, and will not suffer him to be buried, as though he were not worthy to lie in the earth, but to lie in hell.

Lastly, It maketh his will to be no will, as though his goods were not his own; for nothing is ours but that which we have rightly got, and therefore we say, It is mine by right, as though it were not ours unless it be ours by right. This is the judgment of man's law.

Now you shall hear the judgment of God's law. An usurer doth receive two incomes, one of the borrower, and another of the revenger; of the borrower he looks for gain, but of the revenger he looks for punishment. Therefore all the Scripture prophesieth evil unto him, as Micaiah did to Ahab. Solomon saith, Prov. xxviii. 8, 'He which increaseth his riches by usury, gathereth for them which will be merciful to the poor;' as if he should say, When he hath loaden himself like a cart, he shall be unloaden like a cart again, and they shall inherit his money for whom he did never gather it; for he which is unmerciful to the poor, meaneth not to gather for them which will be merciful to the poor. But Solomon saith, that they shall be his heirs which will be merciful as he was unmerciful.

Now mark whether this prophecy of Solomon be true. I know not how many in this city do increase by usury; but this prophecy seemeth to be verified of many, for it is noted, that the riches and lands of aldermen and merchants, and others in London, do not last so long, nor endure so well, as the riches and lands of others in the country; and that their children do not prove so well as others, nor come to that place in the commonweal, which for their wealth their parents looked that they should come to. I can give no reason for it but the reason of Solomon, 'He which increaseth by usury, gathereth for them which will be merciful to the poor;' that is, their riches shall go from their heirs to God's heirs, according to that Prov. xiii. 22, 'The riches of the sinner is laid up for the righteous,' that is, the righteous shall enjoy that which the wicked gathereth.

All riches are uncertain, but the riches which are evil gotten are most uncertain; they may be called moveable goods, for they are very moveable, like the clouds, which never rest till they fall as they climb. God saith, that he will smite the usurer with his fist, Ezek. xxii. 13; not with the palm of his hand, but with his fist, which giveth a greater blow. As his hands were shut against the poor, so God's hands shall be shut against him, that his punishment may be like his sin. But if you will hear their final sentence, David saith here, that they 'shall not dwell in God's temple, nor rest in his holy mountain.' Then we will seek no more punishments, for this punishment is all punishments. If they shall not come to heaven, whose then shall those riches be? Nay, whose then shall the honour[1] be when the day cometh? If he shall not rest in heaven, then he shall rest in hell, where no rest is. Then saith one, the usurer shall cry unto his children, Cursed be you, my children, because you were the cause of these torments; for lest you should be poor, I was an usurer, and robbed others to leave riches unto you. To whom the children shall reply again, Nay, cursed be you, father, for you were the cause of our torments; for if you had not left us other men's goods, we had not kept other men's goods. Thus when they are cursed of God, they shall curse one another; curse the Lord for condemning them, curse their sins for accusing them, curse their parents for begetting them, and curse themselves because they cannot help themselves. As they which are blessed do nothing but bless, so they which are accursed do nothing but curse.

This is the second usury, which the usurer shall receive of God, after he hath received usury of men; then the name of usury shall be fulfilled. As it signifieth *biting*, so when it hath bitten others, it

[1] Qu. 'owner'?—Ed.

shall bite the usurer too, and never rest biting; then they shall wish that they could restore again, as Zaccheus did, Luke xix. and shall not restore because their money is gone. Therefore if Christ be come to your hearts, as he came to Zaccheus's house, restore now as Zaccheus did, and escape this judgment. This is the end of the usurer and his money; if they stay together till death, yet at last there shall be a division, the devil shall take his soul, the earth shall take his body, the strangers shall take his goods, and the mourners shall rejoice under their blacks, and say, Wickedness is come to the grave. Therefore if thou wouldst not be counted an usurer then, refrain to be an usurer now, for they which are usurers now shall be counted usurers then. Thus you have heard the usurers' payment.

Now if you would know whether it be unlawful to give usury, as it is unlawful to take usury, I wish that you could resolve yourselves, that I might not speak of it; for I have heard some preachers say, that there be some truths which they would be loath to preach; and so there be some truths which I would be loath to preach, because many hear by halves; and some for malice or ignorance will take things otherwise than they are spoken; yet because I have promised, I will speak something of it.

Well then, may we neither take usury nor give usury? I know that Jeremiah saith, 'I have not lent upon usury to others, neither have others lent upon usury to me,' Jer. xv. 10; as though both were unlawful, not only to take usury, but to give usury. But thereby Jeremiah doth signify, that he was no meddler in the world, whereby they should envy him like other men; and therefore he cleareth himself chiefly from usury, because usurers were most envied. And to shew that he was not an usurer, he saith, that he was no borrower, which is more lawful than to be an usurer; like a man which saith, I do neither hate him, nor know him; why, it was lawful to know him; but to prove that he did not hate him, he saith that he doth not know him.

So Jeremiah, to prove that he had not lent upon usury, doth say, that he never borrowed upon usury, which many will do that will not lend. The best expositors give this sense of it. I know besides, that Christ did cast forth the buyers out of the temple, as well as the sellers. But that was not for buying, but for buying in the temple, where they should not buy, but pray; or else it was as lawful to buy anything as it is lawful to use it.

I know besides, that it is a common saying, If there were no buyers, there would be no sellers; if there were no bribe-givers,

there would be no bribe-takers. But in this case it may be rather said, If there were no takers, there would be no givers; for the giver doth not make the receiver to take, but the receiver doth make the giver to give, because he will not lend unless the other will give him for the loan; therefore, as we say, the receiver makes the thief, so I may say, the receiver of usury makes the giver of usury.

Therefore I would be loath to compare them which are constrained to borrow upon usury, unto them which did buy in the temple, and were not constrained more than they which sold in the temple. Much less may I compare them which give usury, unto them which take usury; for there is as great odds between them as there is between giving and taking, or between covetousness and necessity; for the one is covetousness, and the other is necessity. He which lendeth for usury, lendeth for covetousness; but he which borroweth upon usury, borroweth for necessity.

Now, for necessity God hath allowed many things; as, for necessity it was lawful for Adam's sons to marry with Adam's daughters, because there were no other women; for necessity it was lawful for David to eat the shew-bread, because he had no other food, 1 Sam. xxi. 6; for necessity it was lawful to work, and heal, and fight upon the Sabbath, which was not lawful but for necessity, Luke xiii. 10; therefore, for necessity, why may not a man pay more than he borrowed? Seeing no scripture doth forbid us to pay more than we borrowed, but to require more than we lend, some do think, that as God did use the ambition of Absalom, and the malice of Pharaoh, and the treachery of Judas, unto good, so men may use the covetousness of usurers unto good; that is, to help at need, when a man is like to be undone, and his children cast away, and his lease forfeited, and many inconveniences beside like to ensue (which you know better than I), unless he have present money at some time to prevent a mischief. For example hereof, I may allege how Jacob did use the sin of Laban, Gen. xxxi. 53. Laban did evil in swearing to idols; but Jacob did not evil in receiving such an oath of him, though it was an unlawful oath; so though the usurer doth evil in taking usury, yet a man doth not evil in giving usury. Beside, I may allege the example of Abraham and Abimelech: Abraham made a covenant with Abimelech; to confirm this covenant, Abraham sware and Abimelech sware, Gen. xxi. 31, Abraham sware by the true God, but Abimelech sware by his false gods, and yet Abraham did receive his oath, and sinned not. So, if Her Majesty and the Turk should make a covenant, the Turk would

not swear as the queen would swear, for the queen would swear by the Lord, but the Turk would swear by Mahomet. If it be lawful then to receive such an oath, though it be an unlawful oath, why may it not be lawful for me to give more than I borrowed, though it be unlawful for the usurer to take more than he lent? Beside, a prince may not lawfully pardon a murderer, yet I think that no man will say in haste, that he which hath committed murder may not take a pardon. As this unlawful giving doth not make the taking unlawful, so the other unlawful taking doth not make the giving unlawful. Besides, it is lawful to suffer injury, though it be unlawful to offer injury; it is lawful to suffer injury, as Christ paid tribute, which was injury, Mat. xvii. 27, but it is not lawful to offer injury, because there are six commandments against it.

Now, to take usury is, as it were, to offer injury; but to give usury is, as it were, to suffer injury; therefore, though I may not take more than I lent, yet may I give more than I borrowed.

Moreover, I may compare giving of usury to swearing; if a man swear without a cause, he sinneth; but if he swear as the word teacheth him to swear, he sinneth not; so, if a man borrow upon usury, and borrow without cause, he sinneth, because he feedeth the usurer; but else, as a man may swear in some case, so in some case a man may borrow upon usury; that is, in case of necessity, when a man must needs borrow, and can borrow of none but usurers.

Lastly, I may allege that usury and usurers are never read in the Scripture but they signify him that takes usury, not him which gives usury; and therefore the Scripture seemeth to forbid taking, but not giving.

Many reasons more are alleged, which I cannot refute, and therefore I will not contradict them. Yet I mean not to decide the question, because I will not be mistaken. But if some should come unto me in that necessity and extremity which I can imagine, and ask, May I borrow money of these usurers to save my life, or my credit, or my living, seeing no man will lend me freely? I would answer him as the prophet answered Naaman, neither Do, nor Do not, but 'Go in peace.' I will not forbid thee, nor I will not condemn thee; but if thy conscience condemn thee not, I think thy sin one of the least sins; and as Naaman prayed, 'Lord, be merciful unto me in this,' 2 Kings v. 18, so I think the Lord will be merciful unto thee in this. But if thy conscience go against it, then do it not; for it is sin to thee, though it be free for another, because 'whatsoever is not done of faith is sin,' Rom. xiv. 23. I charge you, in the fear of God, that you do not mistake that which is said, for

I know no learned preacher nor learned writer of other mind. Yet, lest I should mistake the matter, as I distinguished of lenders, so I will distinguish of borrowers.

If some may borrow upon usury, it doth not follow that all may borrow upon usury, because all have not the like cause; therefore do not say that I teach you to borrow upon usury, for I think that the most in this city which borrow upon usury should not borrow as they do, because they rather maintain usury than supply their necessity. Some I know borrow from mere necessity; if any may be allowed, these are they; but there is a kind of borrowers in this city which feed usurers as the bellows kindle the fire, so they have no need to borrow; but because they would be rich, and richer, and richest of all, therefore they will employ all the money which they can borrow, thinking to get more by the use of it than the usury of it doth come to. This maketh them sell their wares so dear, because they must not only gain the price, but the interest beside, and more than the interest too, or else they gain nothing. These borrowers are in another predicament than those which borrow for necessity, and therefore if they be not old enough to answer for themselves, I am too young to answer for them. There are other borrowers, as I have heard, which for some secret cause would seem barer and needier than they are, either because they would not be charged deeply with subsidies, or else because they would compound with their creditors for a little; therefore they will have always something for usury, that their creditors may think them bare of money, or that others may pity them in their charges. These are like those foxes which have wealth enough to pay their debts, and yet lie in prison because they would defraud their creditors. I doubt not but there be more sorts than I know; I cannot hunt every corner, because I want experience. But this is my conclusion, I would have no man pay interest unto usurers but for necessity, even as a traveller giveth his purse unto a thief because he cannot choose. Thus you have heard what I can say of them which take usury and them which give usury.

Now you would understand the last question: If you have been usurers already, what should you do with that money which you have gained by usury? Surely even as Zaccheus did, restore it again. If you cannot say as Samuel said, 1 Sam. xii. 3, 'Whose goods have I taken?' then you must say as Zaccheus said, Luke xix., Whose goods have I kept? The best thing is, to do no man wrong; but the next to that is, to make him amends. This God signifieth when he saith, Josh. vi. 18, 'Put away the execrable thing

from you; that is, let no unlawful thing stay in your hands, like the wedge of Achan which he had got by sin. The same law serveth for all which is got wrongfully, which was instituted against thieves, 'Restore it again.' The reason of this law is, because the sin is not remitted until the debt be restored.

For as humility is the repentance of pride, and abstinence is the repentance of surfeit, and alms is the repentance of covetousness, and forgiveness is the repentance of malice, so restitution is the repentance of usury. As he which is not humble doth not repent his pride, he which doth not abstain doth not repent his gluttony, he which doth not forgive doth not repent his malice, so he which doth not restore doth not repent his usury; for how can he be said to repent for his usury which liveth by usury still? Therefore Daniel saith to Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. 27, 'Break off thy sins by righteousness,' shewing that nothing but righteousness can break unrighteousness. As diseases are healed by the contrary, so pride is healed by humility, gluttony by abstinence, malice by forgiveness, covetousness by alms, and usury by restoring. This Paul calleth the revenge of a Christian, 2 Cor. vii. 11, when he takes revenge upon his sins, and punisheth his lusts, so that he maketh them do contrary to that which they would do. Therefore you must restore that which you have gotten by usury, or else you do not repent of your usury.

As a camel, when he comes home, casteth off his burden at the door, that he may enter into his stable; so they which are laden with other men's goods, when they go to heaven, must leave their burden where they had it, lest they be too gross to get in at the narrow gate. But as the disciples of Christ said, John vi. 60, 'This is a hard speech;' so to them which have got most that they have by unlawful means, this is a hard speech to bid them restore it again. There be two great rubs in the way;—

First, The loss which they shall sustain if they restore again all which they have got unjustly; then the difficulty to restore it again to the right parties. If you ask me, as Amaziah asked the prophet, 'How shall we do for those hundred talents?' 2 Chron. xxv. 9. How shall I live when all is gone that I have gotten wrongfully? I can say no more than the prophet said to him, 'The Lord is able to give thee more than this.' Zaccheus did not fear how he should live, but Zaccheus did fear to offend, Luke xix; so thou shouldst not fear to restore other men's goods, but thou shouldst fear to keep other men's goods; and as Zaccheus lived when he had restored, so shalt thou live when thou hast restored. He

which saith, Mal. iii. 10, 'Try me if I will not pour down a blessing;' try him whether he will not pour down a blessing; for he hath promised to bless the lender as well as the sacrificer, Deut. xv. 10. He which is the Lord of all can give thee more wealth than thou needest, but if you cannot restore to the owner, nor to his heirs, then give it to the poor, for they are the next heirs; and repent that thou hast kept it so long, but in no wise thou mayest keep it unto thyself, because it is none of thine.

When Hezekiah was like to die, Isaiah said unto him, 'Set thy things in order before thou die,' Isa. xxxviii. 1. That which he advised him, he adviseth all; set your things in order before you die. What is this to set things in order, but to restore unto every one his own? When thou bequeathest thy body to the earth, then thy body is set in order; when thou bequeathest thy soul to God, then thy soul is set in order; when thou bequeathest thy goods to the owners, then thy goods are set in order; therefore if thou die with other men's goods in thy hand, then thou diest before thou hast set things in order, and then thou diest in thy sins, and then no promise in all the Scripture appertaineth unto thee, because nothing is promised unto sinners, but unto penitent sinners.

Therefore, that you may not die in your sins, it is necessary to make restitution before you die, or else you die in your sin, and are crossed out of all the joys of heaven. Wherefore, as Abner said to Joab, 2 Sam. ii. 26, 'Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end?' so remember whether this course will be sweet or bitter in the end. If they be condemned, which give not their own goods to them which need, like the rich glutton, how can they be saved which draw other men's goods from them, that have more need of theirs?

Thus you have heard the definition of usury, and the derivation of it, and the unlawfulness of it, and the kinds of it, and the punishment of it, and the arguments which are alleged for it, and what may be thought of them which do not take usury but give usury, and what they should do which have got their living by usury.

Now, seeing you may not be usurers to men, let every man hereafter be an usurer to God, which promiseth, Mat. xix. 29, 'If thou leave father or mother, or wife or children, or house or land, for him;' not ten in the hundred, but an hundred for ten, nay, 'an hundred for one, and in the world to come life everlasting,' that is, a thousand for one. That we receive this usury, let us pray that the words which we have heard out of this psalm may dwell with us till we dwell in heaven.

# THE CHRISTIAN'S SACRIFICE.

# EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

To my late Auditors, the Congregation of Clement Danes, all the good will which I can wish.

BELOVED in Christ Jesus, my first fruits, I have nothing but this mite to leave with you, which is the sum of all my sermons. Ye have heard it already; and as the apostle calls the Corinthians his epistle, 2 Cor. iii. 2, so ye should be my sermon; that is, my sermon should be printed in your hearts, as this is printed in paper. If you have not given your hearts to him that sent for them, now think that God hath sent for them again, and hear me writing, whom ye cannot hear speaking. Take not custom for religion; shun occasion as well as sin; seek the use of everything; desire not to have your kingdom here. And so I leave you all with Christ, whom I have preached, to bring forth the fruit of that seed which is sown, beseeching you for all the love that you have of heaven, that ye would not count anything in this world worthy to keep your hearts from God, but think of the day when ye shall give account for every sermon which ye have heard; and he which hath called you in this prison will glorify you in his palace, where ye shall see him to whom ye have given your hearts, and enjoy that blessing of blessings which makes all the world to worship him. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which hath begun to draw you to his kingdom, never leave you until you come unto it. Amen.

Your late unworthy servant for the Lord,

H. S.

# THE CHRISTIAN'S SACRIFICE.

*My son, give me thy heart.*—PROV. XXIII. 26.

To bind all the lessons together which ye have learned since I came, this sentence came unto my mind, 'My son, give me thy heart,' which is the sum of all that ye have heard, and shews in what chest you should lay up these treasures in your heart, and then give that heart to God, and he will keep all safe, Job xxii. 22, Luke ii. 19, Ps. xxxvii. 22, Dan. vii. 28.

A supplication is come, as it were, from God to man, that man would send God his heart; penned by Solomon, under the name of Wisdom, Prov. ix. 1, and directed to her sons. Wisdom entreateth her sons that they would give her their hearts. This Wisdom is God; we by adoption are his sons, Rom. viii. 15, Gal. iv. 24, and our heart is that which Christ calls 'spirit and truth,' John iv. 24, without hypocrisy. Give me that heart, saith God. He which gives anything to another, considers before what he loves, and gives that which he thinks will be accepted, that he may be loved for the gift; therefore David, as though he were at a stand, and sorrowed that he could not do enough for God, breaks forth to himself, 'What shall I give unto the Lord for all that he hath given me?' Ps. cxvi. 12. The Lord hearing, as it were, these sighs of his servants which care and study what they may do to please him, comes in their suspense, and like a friend which desires nothing but good will, answers from heaven, 'My son, give me thy heart.' Under which suit he taxeth them beside which are suitors always to him, and look still to receive like the publicans, but never cast in their mind what they should give; therefore their tribute is set down by equal measure under the king's seal, every man must homage his heart.

He which always gave, now craves; and he which craves always,

now gives. Christ stands at the door like a poor man, and asks not bread, nor clothes, nor lodgings, which we should give to his members, but our heart, that is, even the continent of all, and governor of man's house, which sits on the bench like a judge to give the charge, and teacheth the tongue to speak, the hand to work, the foot to walk, the ear to attend, the eye to observe, the mind to choose, and the flesh to obey. That we must present to God, like a burnt-sacrifice, wherein all is offered together, Lev. i. 9, a wise tongue, a diligent hand, a wary foot, a watchful eye, an attentive ear, an humble mind, an obedient flesh, put all together, and it is but the heart: 'My son,' saith God, 'give me thy heart.' Here thou art a giver, God the petitioner, thy heart the gift which he claimeth by the name of a son. Should God be a suppliant unto thee and me, but that our unthankfulness condemns us, that for all the things which he hath given unto us, we never considered yet what we should give unto him before he asketh? He is fain to put in his petition like a suitor, and say, 'Give me thy heart.'

Mark what God hath chosen for himself: not that which any other should lose by, like the demands of them which care for none but themselves, but that which, being given to God, moves us to give unto every man his due, as Zaccheus, when he gave heart to Christ, parted his goods to the poor, and restored to all that which he had gotten by wrong, Luke xix. 8.

Once God required offerings and sacrifices which men were unwilling to give, because it was a dear service of God, Mal. i. 13, and iii. 13; but now he saith that the heart is more than all burnt-offerings and sacrifices, Mark xii. 33. Jacob loved Joseph more than all his brethren, Gen. xxxvii., so God loveth the heart more than all her fellows; this mite God will have for all his benefits, which we may best afford him. Thy alms to the poor, thy counsel to the simple, thy inheritance to thy children, thy tribute to Cæsar, but thy heart to God; he which is a Spirit requires a spirit, John iv. 24, and delights to dwell in the hearts of men. Here God plants himself, as in a castle which is always besieged with the world, the flesh, and the devil. If the enemy get a thought, or a word, or a work, yet he hath but razed the walls; but if he take the heart, then the fortress is lost. For that time all our thoughts, words, and works are captive unto him: he bids them go, and they go; do, and they do it.

That man is like Esau, which had an inheritance, which had a heart, but now he hath not possession of his own; therefore, give God thy heart, that he may keep it; not a piece of thy heart, not

a room in thy heart, but thy heart. The heart divided, dieth. God is not like the mother which would have the child divided, but like the natural mother which said, Rather than it should be divided, let her take all. Let the devil have all, if he which gave it be not worthy of it. God hath no cope-mate, therefore he will have no parting of stakes, but all or none; and therefore, he which asks here thy heart, in the sixth of Deuteronomy and the fifth verse, asketh 'all thy heart, all thy soul, and all thy strength;' thrice he requireth *all*, lest we should keep a thought behind; yet it is thy heart, that is, a vain heart, a barren heart, a sinful heart, until thou give it unto God, and then it is the spouse of Christ, the temple of the Holy Ghost, and the image of God, so changed, and formed, and refined, that God calls it a new heart.

Some have a double heart, as it is in the twelfth Psalm, ver. 2; but God acknowledgeth but one heart, saying, 'Give me thy heart;' not, Give thy hearts, declaring that a single heart is pleasing unto him, and that they which have a double heart, 'a heart and a heart,' have never a good heart.

God doth not require the heart, as though he required no more but the heart, like the pope, which saith, Give me thy heart, it sufficeth. To maintain his papists pendant and crouchant, which live amongst Christians, he requireth nothing of such but their heart, that they may worship God with their lips, but dissemble their religion, and forswear their opinion, and come to sermons, and subscribe to our laws, and seem protestants. As the devil licenseth witches to seem Christians, so they give him their heart; he dispenseth with them to dissemble, and give the rest as they list; but God requireth the heart, because we should not dissemble; for in the twelfth to the Romans he commandeth the body too,—'offer up your bodies,'—which we cannot do unless we give the heart, and hand, and tongue, and eyes, and ears, and all; for the body is all, but the heart is chief in request, because if there be any goodness, it lies in the heart, and because he which gives the heart gives all; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, Luke vi. 45, the hand worketh, the eye looketh, the ear listeneth, the foot walketh to do good or evil.

Therefore there is such strife for the heart as there was for Moses's body. Give it me, saith the Lord; Give it me, saith the tempter; Give it me, saith the pope; Give it me, saith riches; Give it me, saith pleasure; as though thou must needs give it. Now here is the choice, whether thou wilt give it to God or to the devil; God's heart, or the devil's heart, whose wilt thou be?

Thus doth man hang in a balance, like a young virgin which hath many suitors; some she fancieth for parentage, some for personage, some for friends, some for wealth, some for wit, some for virtue, and after all chooseth the worst of all. So the heart hath so many suitors beside God, that sometimes she marrieth with one, sometimes with another; the world keeps her, the flesh keeps her, the devil keeps her; which have no more interest in her than Herod to his sister, Mat. xiv. 4, but seek her spoil; like them that marry for riches, are glad when one dies, that another may come. These suitors are like Absalom, which did not seek the hearts of the people like David, but stole them with flattery and lies, 2 Sam. xv. 6; but God would have thee give thy heart.

As a man considers what he doth when he gives, so God licenseth us to consider of that which we do for him, whether he deserves it, whether we owe it, whether he can require it, lest it should come against our will; therefore *give me*, saith God, as though he would not strain upon us or take from us; but if thou wilt give him thy heart, then he accepts it; it must come freely like a gift, as his blessings come to us, and then his demand is granted. Here is no respect of time, how long thou mayest stay it, or how long he will keep it; but give it, is the present time; as though he would have it out of hand while he asketh, before ye go out of the church; for what can we ask of him, when we deny him but one thing when he asks of us? Therefore consider who is a suitor to you. Now I am a collector for God to gather hearts; either you must grant him or deny him; think who shall lose by it, if thou wilt not pay thy landlord his rent. How many subjects would rejoice if they had anything to give to their prince, and pray her to accept it, and be glad if she would take it, that they might but say, I have given a present to the queen! So Mary rejoiced that she had a little oil to sprinkle upon Christ; but she would take no money for it. Yea, the widow of Zareptah was so joyful that she had a little food for the prophet, that she spared it from her child and herself, to serve him first. So they which love the Lord, like his disciples, which left all to follow him, Luke v. 11, had rather that he should have their riches, their honours, their hearts, and their lives, than they themselves.

Why is David called 'a man after God's own heart,' 1 Sam. xiii. but because when God said, 'Give me thy heart,' his spirit answered like an echo, 'I give thee my heart'? Is God so desirous of my heart? What good can my heart do to God? It is not worthy to come under his roof. I would I had a better gift to send unto my Lord; go, my heart, to thy Maker; the Bridegroom hath sent for thee, put

on thy wedding garment, for the King himself will marry thee. Who is not sorry now that he did not give his heart before? Is he not worthy to die which will take his heart from him that made it, from him that redeemed it, from him which preserves it, from him that will glorify it; to give it unto him which will infect it, torment it, condemn it? Will a servant reach the cup to a stranger, when his master calls for it? Or will a man sell his coat, if he have no more? What dost thou reserve for God, when thou hast given Satan thy heart? Christ hath promised to come and dwell with thee, Rev. iii. 20; where shall he stay, where shall he dine, if the chamber be taken up, and the heart let forth to another? Thou art but a tenant, and yet thou takest his house over his head, and placest in it whom thou wilt, as if thou wert landlord.

Canst thou possess another man's goods, but he will molest thee, and trouble thee, until he have his own? 2 Sam. iii. 8. And dost thou think to keep that which is God's, and hold it in peace? No, he will never suffer thee to rest, but cry upon thee day and night. As Moses vexed Pharaoh until he let the people go, Exod. viii. 13, and ix. 28; so thou shalt be distracted with fears and thoughts, as one plague followeth another, until thou let thy heart go, that it may serve God, Acts xvi. 14; for as if a man should pull out thy heart, and take it from thee, so grievous is it to God to keep thy heart from him, Exod. viii. and ix. and x.

Therefore let all suitors have their answer, that thy heart is married already. As Isaac answered Esau, 'Jacob have I blessed, and he shall be blessed,' Gen. xxvii., so thou mayest say, God hath my heart, and he shall have it; and them that crave it hereafter, send them to Christ for it, for it is not thine to give, if thou hast given it to God already. But take heed thy heart do not lie to thyself, and say it is God's when it is the world's; like Jeroboam's wife, which would not seem to be Jeroboam's wife, 1 Kings xiv. 2. By this thou shalt know whether thou hast given it to him or no; if the heart be gone, all will follow. As the sun riseth first, and then the beasts arise from their dens, the fowls from their nests, and men from their beds; so when the heart sets forward to God, all the members will follow after it, the tongue will praise him, the foot will follow him, the ear will attend him, the eye will watch him, the hand will serve him, nothing will stay after the heart, but every one goes, like handmaids after their mistress, Ps. cxxiii. 2; this Christ verified, saying, Make clean within, and all will be clean, Mat. xxiii. 26. Therefore the publican did beat upon his heart, as though he were angry with it, because it did not waken all the rest; shewing, that as the Father

gave us all when he gave his Son, Rom. viii. 32, so we give him all when we give our hearts. This is the melody which Paul speaketh of: Eph. v. 19, 'Make melody to the Lord in your hearts;' shewing, that there is a concert of all the members when the heart is in tune, and that it sounds like a melody in the ears of God, and makes us rejoice while we serve him. We have example hereof in Christ, which said it was meat and drink unto him to do his Father's will, John iv. 34; and in David, which danced to see the ark, 2 Sam. vi. 14; and in the Israelites, of whom it is said, that they rejoiced when they offered from their heart unto the Lord, 1 Chron. xxix. 9.

Therefore Solomon, picking out the heart for God, spake as though he would set out the pleasantest, and fairest, and easiest way to serve him, without any grudging, or toil, or weariness. Touch but the first link, all the rest will follow; so set the heart a-going, and it is like the poise of a clock, which turns all the wheels one way. Such an oil is upon the heart, which makes all nimble and current about it; therefore it is almost as easy to speak well, and do well, as to think well. If the heart indite a good matter, no marvel though the tongue be the pen of a ready writer, Ps. xlv. 1, but if the heart be dull, all is like a left hand, so unapt and untoward, that it cannot turn itself to any good.

Therefore God's suitors have so hard passage in men's councils, judgments, and parliaments, because they do not give him their hearts, which should be the first offering of all; if they would give him their hearts before they sit down to hear his cause, they could not deny him anything that is for his honour, though it were against their profit; but as Christ saith, Mat. xxvi. 39, 'Not my will, but thy will;' so they would say, It is not our kingdom, but thy kingdom; it is not our church, but thy church; therefore not our will, but thy will; not our law, but thy law; not our discipline, but thy discipline reign in it; and all that give their hearts, subscribe to this: the rest say, Not thy will, but our will; not thy law, but our law; not thy discipline, but our discipline; because, as the apostle saith, 'They seek their own glory, but not Christ's,' Philip. ii. 21. This hath been the rub ever since antichrist was first resisted. Herod could not see how he should be king, if Christ should reign, Mat. ii. 3; therefore, as the image-makers cried and stormed when images should go down, alleging that they lived by that craft, Acts xix. 25, so if you mark what kind of men they were which did preach, and write, and labour so hotly against religion, it is they that were like to lose some of their dignities or their commodities by it.

The scribes and pharisees resisted Christ more than the people, John xi. 47, because he denounced woe to them, and misliked that they should be called rabbi, Mat. xxiii. 7. How hard is it to follow Christ when he saith, 'Leave all,' Mark x. 21; nay, if he bid us leave anything for him, though we should leave ourselves, Mat. xvi. 24. The tongue will not praise, because the heart doth not love; the ear doth not hear, because the heart doth not mind; the hand doth not give, because the heart doth not pity; the foot doth not go, because the heart will not stir: all stay upon the heart, like the captain that should give the onset. Thus to shew that he deserveth all, the Lord requireth that which bringeth all.

Secondly, God requireth the heart, shewing that all the things of this world are not worthy of it, nor a piece of it, nor a thought, unless it be to contemn them, as Solomon thought of vanity, Eccles. i. 13, 14; for if the heart be the temple of God, he which giveth it to anything else committeth sacrilege, and breaketh that commandment, 'Give unto God that which is God's,' Mat. xxii. 21.

Thirdly, That all should consent so with the heart, that we should speak as if our heart did speak, Ps. iv. 4; pray as if our heart did pray, hear as if our heart did hear, give as if our heart did give, remit as if our heart did remit, and counsel as if our heart did counsel, as the apostle saith, 'Do all things heartily,' Col. iii. 23, which if we could keep, nothing that we do should any way trouble us, because nothing is troublesome but that which goeth against the heart.

Fourthly, That we should serve God for himself, and not for ourselves, as he which gives his heart doth all for love. This Christ requires, when he cast off that disciple that offered to follow him for advantage, Mat. viii. 19, 'The birds have nests, and the foxes have holes,' saith Christ, 'but the Son of man hath not a place to hide his head,' shewing his disciple, if he will follow him, he must not look for a place to hide his head, he must leave all to follow Christ, as Peter did, Mat. iv. 20; and not seek all by following him, as they that went after him for bread, John vi. 26.

Fifthly, That we should not serve God by fits, as we use to pray when the night comes, to hear when the Sabbath comes, to fast when Lent comes, to repent when death comes; but the service of the heart is a continual service, like that in 1 Thess. v. 16, 'Rejoice evermore, pray continually, in all things give thanks.' Who is this which rejoiceth, and prayeth, and thanketh continually? The tongue prayeth but sometime, the ear attendeth but sometime, he hand giveth but sometime; but the heart prayeth, and praiseth,

and worshippeth always. A man may serve God always with his heart, and never be weary, because the heart cannot serve him unless it rejoice in his service, and therefore the Israelites praised God with music, 1 Chron. xv. 16, which did not delight God, but shewed that they delighted in his service, as they did in music. But if the tongue, or the hand, or the ear, think to serve God without the heart, it is the irksomest occupation in the world, the hour of tediousness, like a long sickness; he is tired before he begin, and thinketh himself in the stocks until the sermon be ended, and until his prayer be done, that he may be at liberty, and return to his old bias again.

Lastly, This shews how God mislikes our coldness in hearing, or praying, if we cannot say with the virgin in Luke, the first chapter, and six-and-fortieth verse, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord.' All that comes short of this is hypocrisy, and pleaseth God like the offering of Cain, Gen. iv. 5. As Joseph charged his brethren that they should not come to him for corn unless they brought Benjamin unto him, whom they left at home, Gen. xlii. 15, Mark xv. 8, so God will not have us to speak to him, nor come to him for anything, unless we bring our hearts unto him, which we leave behind. The tongue without the heart is a flattering tongue; the eye without the heart is a wicked eye; the ear without the heart is a vain ear; the hand without the heart is a false hand. Dost thou think that God will accept a flattering tongue, a wicked eye, a vain ear, a false hand, which rejecteth a sacrifice if it be but lean or bruised? No, saith Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, Chap. xiii. ver. 1, 'If I give all that I have, and not love,' that is, give not my heart, 'it avails me nothing.' He saith not, that they which give not their heart give nothing, but that they shall have nothing for such offerings. He which brings but a mite, and brings his heart, brings more than he which offers a talent, Mark xii. 42; and he shall go away more justified than he which said, 'All these have I kept from my youth upward,' Mat. xix. 20; for God is not mocked, Gal. vi. 7, but knows how much is behind, though Ananias seem to bring all, Acts v. 3. He marks how I speak, and how you hear, and how we pray in this place; and if it come not from the heart, he repels it as fast as it goes up, like the smoke which climbs towards heaven, but never comes there. Man thinks when he hath the gift, he hath the heart too; but God, when he hath the gift, calls for the heart still, Ps. lxxiii. 1. The pharisee's prayer, the harlot's vow, the traitor's kiss, the sacrifice of Cain, the feast of Jezebel, the oblations of Ananias, the tears of Esau, are nothing to

him, but still he cries, Bring thy heart, or bring nothing; like a jealous husband, when he hath a wife, yet he is jealous whether he hath her heart or no, so, whatsoever thou do, yet God is jealous still, and respects not what thou dost, but whether thou do it from thy heart; that is, of mere love toward him. If Pilate had washed his heart when he washed his hands, Mat. xxvii. 24, he had been cleaner than Naaman when he came out of Jordan, 2 Kings v. 13; if the Shechemites had circumcised their hearts when they circumcised their flesh, Gen. xxxiv. 22, they had saved their souls when they lost their lives; if Cain had offered his heart when he offered the fruits, his offering had been as acceptable as Abel's; but as swine's flesh was like sheep's flesh, yet was not accepted, because it came from an unclean beast, so Cain's offering, Gen. iv. 3, Pilate's washing, the Shechemite's circumcision, the pharisee's prayer, and fasts, and alms, were as fair as the apostle's; yet they had no reward but 'Woe to you hypocrites,' Mat. xxiii., because they wanted the heart, which is like the fire that kindleth the sacrifice, 1 Kings xviii. 25. But will he require our prayers, and fasts, and alms, as he did theirs? Yea, saith Christ, 'Except your righteousness exceed the pharisees',' Mat. v. 20; that is, except we give our heart beside our lips, and our ears, and our alms, which they gave, 'we shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,' because our righteousness doth not exceed the righteousness of the pharisees, but their righteousness very far exceedeth ours.

Christ doth not bid them woe because they were pharisees, as we are not, but because they were hypocrites, as we are. God delights himself in giving, Micah vii. 18, 1 Cor. ix. 7, and therefore he loveth a cheerful giver; but he cannot give cheerfully which gives not his heart. Therefore as Judas thought the oil spent which was poured upon Christ, Mat. xxvi. 9, and wished the price of it in his purse, so they grudge and grieve when they should do good; and think, Shall I give it? can I spare? what will it bring? So the good work dieth in the birth, like a bird which droopeth in the hand, while the head considers whether he shall let her go or hold her still. As easy to wring Hercules's club out of his fists, as to wring a penitent tear from their eyes, a faithful prayer from their lips, or a good thought from their heart, which cannot afford the heart itself. All is too much which they do, and they think God more beholding to them for blurting out a *paternoster*, or staying a sermon, or fasting a Friday, than they to him for all his benefits; and when they have done, what is their reward? 'Woe be unto you,' like the scribes and pharisees, Mat. xxiii. 1, because you give not

your hearts, but your mouths; therefore we do but vex ourselves, and lose our labour, thinking to make God believe that we pray, when indeed our lips do but pray; whereby it comes to pass, as we serve him, so he serveth us; our peace is not in deed, but in word, Mat. xv. 8; our joy is not in heart, but in countenance; a false comfort, like our false worship; for he which giveth God his lips instead of his heart, teacheth God to give him stones instead of bread, that is, a shadow of comfort for comfort itself.

Now when we have given God fair words and long prayers, and solemn fasts, and mourning countenances, he puts us in but a word more to fill up the sacrifice, 'Give me thy heart,' and it sufficeth. It is like the last suit of Abraham, when he said to God, 'I will speak but this once;' so if thou wilt hear him in this, he will ask no more; therefore now conclude, whether God shall have thy heart or nothing; if thou consider what right he hath to ask it, and what cause thou hast to give it, thou canst not keep it till I end my sermon.

Of all the suitors which come unto you, it seems there is none which hath any title to claim the heart but God, which challengeth it by the name of a son, Mal. i. 8, as if he should say, Thou shalt give it to thy Father which gave it to thee: art thou my son? My sons give me their hearts, and by this they know that I am their Father, if I dwell in their hearts, for the heart is the temple of God, 1 Cor. vi. 16; therefore, if thou be his son, thou wilt give him thy heart, because thy Father desires it, thy Maker desires it, thy Redeemer desires it, thy Saviour desires it; thy Lord, and thy King, and thy Master desires it, which hath given his Son for a ransom, his Spirit for a pledge, his word for a guide, the world for a walk, and reserves a kingdom for thine inheritance. Canst thou deny him anything, which hath given the heir for the servant, his beloved for his enemy, the best for the worst? Rom. viii. 32. Canst thou deny him anything, whose goodness created us, whose favour elected us, whose mercy redeemed us, whose wisdom converteth us, whose grace preserved us, whose glory shall glorify us? Oh, if thou knewest, as Christ said to the woman of Samaria when she huckt[1] to give him water, John iv. 10, 'If thou knewest who it is that saith unto thee,' Give me thy heart, thou wouldst say unto him, as Peter did when Christ would wash his feet, John xiii. 9, 'Lord, not my feet only, but my hands and my head;' not my heart only, but all my body, and my thoughts, and my words, and my works, and my goods, and my life, take all that thou hast given. For why should we not give

[1] That is, 'hesitated.'—Ed.

him our hearts as well as our lips, unless we mean to deceive him with words for deeds? If Abraham gave Lot leave to choose what part he did like, Gen. xiii. 8, 9, shall we not give God leave to choose that which he liketh? If he did not love thee, he would not require thy heart; for they which love, require the heart. The master requires labour, the landlord requires service, the captain requires fight; but he that requires the heart, requires it for love, for the heart is love. We will give him little, if we will not give him that which he asks for love towards ourselves; though he say, give it, yet indeed he hath bought it, and that dearly, Ps. xxxi. 5, with the dearest blood that ever was shed, 1 Peter i. 18, 19. He gave thee his heart before he desired thy heart; but a heart for a heart, a living heart for a heart which died. Thou dost not lose thy life, as he did for thee, but thou bestowest thy life to glorify him; thou dost not part from thy heart when thou givest it, but he doth keep it for thee, lest the serpent should steal it from thee, as he stole paradise from Adam when it was in his own custody, Gen. iii. 1. He can keep it better than we, and he will keep it if we commit it to him, and lay it in bed of peace, and lap it with joy, and none shall take it out of his hands, Ps. xxxi. 5, 7. Therefore, if ye ask me, why you should give your hearts to God? I do not answer like the disciples which went for the ass and colt, 'The Lord hath need,' Mat. xxi. 3, but we have need; for unless we give our souls, how can he have them? and unless he have them, how can he save them? Therefore we have need. If ever the saying were true, Acts xx. 35, 'It is more blessed to give than to take,' more blessed are they which do give their hearts to God than they which take possession of the world. Abigail did not gain so much by her gift to David, 1 Sam. xxv. 43, as we for our gift to God; for she was married unto David, but we are married unto Christ, of whom the church doth sing in Cant. v., that 'no well-beloved is like her beloved.' What heart would not be loved of him, though it do not love him? Who can assoil this riddle? We would have Christ our bridegroom, and yet we will not be his spouse. I would have him take my heart, and yet I will not give it. How should he keep it, or save it, or glorify it, if I hide it away, like the servant that buried his talent in the earth? Mat. xxv. 24. So much as I keep from God, so much I keep from heaven, and will not suffer him to glorify it; as if I did wish one part to be saved, and another damned. He which would have his heart sanctified, and comforted, and enlightened, and will not give it to God which should do it, is like a woman which would have her dough leavened,

and layeth her dough in one place and the leaven in another, where one cannot touch the other; then cometh the tempter, and takes them asunder, and seizeth upon the heart, because he finds her alone. This is his seed-time, now he enters into it, and fills it with his poison, till the temple of God be the sink of sin; and the heart, which should be the seat of holiness, grace, and wisdom, a heart of pride, a heart of envy, a heart of lust, more like a belly than a heart. How many things lodge in the heart when God is not there? It is a world to think how the divine soul, which descended from heaven to bring forth fruit, is become a fit soil for every weed, whereby we may see what hearts we have before we give them to God.

Therefore now ask your hearts whose they are, and how they are moved with these words. How many here will give to this collection? Whose heart is gone up unto him since I began to speak? Here one and there one runs up the ladder, like the angels that Jacob saw in his dream, Gen. xxviii. 12, and sing with David, Ps. cviii. 1, 'My heart is prepared, my heart is prepared;' and why not thou as well as he? Doth he not send for all alike? Wilt thou be the thorn, or the stone, or the highway where the seed doth lose his fruit, Mat. xiii.? Why hadst thou rather be compelled than invited, since thou art called to a banquet, Mat. xxii.? How many hearts more might we draw to God, if all that be here would go to him this day? But thus it stands, God hath sent unto us for our hearts, and we answer him as the husbandmen of the vineyard when he sent for fruits, Mat. xxi. 33; or as Nabal answered David when he sent for food, Who is David? 1 Sam. xxv. 10; or who is the Lord, that I should take my heart from pleasure and sin, and give it unto him? Thus we demur upon the cause when we should give, whether we should give or no; and ask the flesh, and our lusts, and our pleasures; and if the devil will not give his assent, then we return an excuse, It is not mine to give; or if thou canst get the devil's good will, I will not stand; or let sin and pleasure have it for a while, and when they have done with it, then God shall have it. Thus everything which should be thrown out, hath a place in our heart; and he which should be received in, can have no room there, though he would open the doors of heaven, if we would open the doors of our hearts, that the King of glory might come in, Ps. xxiv. 4.

What shall become of those hearts, when he which craves them now, shall judge them hereafter? Then shall they stand like Esau, and see them blessed, like Jacob, Gen. xxvii. 36, which gave their

hearts; and cry themselves, as he did to his father Isaac, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for us? What a heavy heart will it be then, when it may not joy any longer here, and the joys of heaven are shut against it? and he which desired it will not have it, because it comes like the foolish virgins, when the doors of mercy are shut, Mat. xxv. 11.

Thus ye have heard what God requires for all that he hath given you, and how all your services are lost until you bring it. What shall I wish you now before my departure? I wish you would give all your hearts to God while I speak, that ye might have a kingdom for them. Send for your hearts where they are wandering, one from the bank, another from the tavern, another from the shop, another from the theatres; call them home, and give them all to God, and see how he will welcome them, as the father embraceth the son, Luke xv. 22. If your hearts were with God, durst the devil fetch them? Durst those sins come at them? Even as Dinah was deflowered when she strayed from home, Gen. xxxiv. 2, so is the heart when it strayeth from God. Therefore call thy members together, and let them fast, like a quest of twelve men, until they consent upon the law, before any more terms pass, to give God his right; and let him take the heart which he wooeth, which he would marry, which he would endow with all his goods, and make it the heir of the crown. When you pray, let your heart pray; when you hear, let your heart hear; when you give, let your heart give; whatsoever you do, set the heart to do it, Prov. iii. 1; and if it be not so perfect as it should or ought to be, yet it shall be accepted for the friend that gives it, Dan. x. 12.

Now if you cannot command your hearts to turn unto God, because the devil pleads custom, and the flesh will not agree to leave her possessions, then remember what Christ saith, Mat. vi. 2, 'When you give alms, let not your left hand know what the right hand doth'; so the flesh must not know what the spirit doth. Thou must not make thy lust of counsel; but as Abraham when he was bid to offer his son, rose up betime, and left his wife at home, and never made Sarah privy, lest she should stop him, being more tender over her child (like women) than the father is, Gen. xxii. 6; so thou must give thy heart to God before the flesh hear of it, for if Abigail had consulted with Nabal whether she should have supplied David with victuals or no when he sent, the miser would never have consented, which scolded so soon as he heard of it, 1 Sam. xxv. 18; therefore she went alone, and gave that which he asked, and never told her husband what she would do, lest he should hinder her,

which sought her welfare and his too; so we should steal our hearts from the world, as the world stole them from us, and transport them to God when the flesh is asleep.

I have but one day more to teach you all that you must learn of me, therefore I would hold you here until you assent to give all your hearts to God. If ye give them not now, where have I cast the seed? and how have you heard all this year? If ye will give them now, ye shall be adopted this day the sons of God, and I shall leave you in the bosom of Christ, which will give you heaven for your hearts. The Lord Jesus grant that my words be not the savour of death unto any soul here, 2 Cor. ii. 16, but that you may go in strength thereof through prosperity and adversity, till you hear that comfort from heaven, 'Come, ye blessed, and receive the inheritance prepared for you.'

# THE TRUE TRIAL OF THE SPIRITS.

# THE TRUE TRIAL OF THE SPIRITS.

*Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesying. Try all things, and keep that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil.*—1 THES. V. 19–22.

AT the last time when I spake of these words, 'In all things give thanks,' and 'Quench not the Spirit,' touching the first, I shewed you that it is an easier thing to obtain of God, than to be thankful to him; for more have gone away speeders, than have gone away thankers, Luke xvii. 17. Then, how the wicked are beholden to God, as well as the just; and therefore it is said, that the sun doth shine upon the just and the unjust, Mat. v. 45. Then, how Jacob came not so barely to Laban, when he brought nothing with him but his staff in his hand, Gen. xxix. 13, as man cometh into this world without strength or staff to sustain him; which made the apostle to ask, 1 Cor. iv. 7, 'What have you which you have not received?' Therefore, to teach man to be thankful unto his Maker, he was not made in paradise, Gen. ii. 8, the place of joy and happiness; but being made out of paradise, he was brought into paradise, to shew how all his joy and happiness came from God, and not from nature, that he might know where to bestow his thanks. Therefore David, to persuade all men to thankfulness, saith, 'It is a good and pleasant thing to be thankful,' Ps. cxlvii. 1. If he had said no more but *good*, all which love goodness are bound to be thankful; but when he saith not only *good*, but *pleasant* too, all which love pleasure are bound to be thankful; and therefore, as Peter's mother-in-law, so soon as Christ healed her of a fever, rose up immediately to minister unto him, Mat. viii., so we, so soon as Christ hath done anything for us, should rise up immediately to serve him. And as Hannah,

when she had received a son from God, did consecrate him to God again, 1 Sam. i., so whatsoever we receive of God, we must give it to God again; that is, use it to his glory, and make it one of our means to serve him; for all things which we receive in this life are given unto us, lest we should want any means to serve God. Then because the apostle requireth thanks for all things, I shewed you that he is not thankful before God which thanks him only for his benefits; but he is thankful indeed which thanks him for his chastisement. It may be, while the Lord giveth, many will say, 'Blessed be the name of the Lord.' But when the Lord taketh, who will say, 'Blessed be the name of the Lord'? When the Lord did take, Job said, 'Blessed be the name of the Lord,' Job i. There is one example, then, of Paul's doctrine, which in all things gave thanks. The prophet David saith, Ps. xxiii. 4, 'Thy staff and thy rod have comforted me;' there is another example of Paul's doctrine, which gave thanks unto God for his rod; for an obedient child doth not only kiss the hand which giveth, but the rod which beateth.

After speaking of those words, *Quench not the Spirit*, I shewed you that the Spirit doth signify the gifts and motions of the Spirit. The Spirit in the 3d of Matthew is likened to fire; and therefore Paul saith well, 'Quench not the Spirit,' because fire may be quenched.

Here I took occasion to speak of zeal, which is the fire of the Spirit; shewing you, that God is pleased with zeal, as men are pleased with love; but as Christ did baptize with fire, so John did baptize with water, Mat. iii. 11; and as the Holy Ghost descended with fire, so he did descend with wind, that cooleth fire, Acts ii.; shewing that our zeal should be a temperate zeal, as our Master's was. Isaiah was commanded to cry, but not to roar, Isa. vi. 8; the Jews might not gather too much manna, no more than they might gather too little, Exod. xvi. 18. As there is a measure in knowledge, so there is a measure in zeal; that is, be zealous according to discretion, as Paul saith, Rom. xii. 3, 'Be wise according to sobriety.' The disciples were commended for their zeal, when they left all to follow Christ, Mark x. 28; but Christ reproved them for their zeal, when they would pray for fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans, Luke ix. 55. Therefore zeal and discretion united together, are like the two lions which supported the throne of Solomon, 1 Kings x.; and he which hath them both, is like Moses for his mildness, and like Phinehas for his fervency; therefore, as wine is tempered with water, so let discretion temper zeal. But I need not bring water to quench that fire that is out already. I would rather

I could say of you, You are too zealous, as Paul told the Athenians, they were too superstitious, Acts xvii. 22. But our sickness is not a hot sickness, but a cold sickness; the hot body is distempered, but the cold body is dead. Zeal was never infamous before our days; the papists are commended if they be zealous; but the protestant, if he be zealous, is held in derision.

Then I shewed you how the Spirit is quenched, as a man doth quench his reason with over-much wine; and therefore we say, When the wine is in, the wit is out; because before, he seems to have reason, and now he seems to have none; so our zeal, and our faith, and our love, are quenched with sin. Every vain thought, and every idle word, and every wicked deed, is like so many drops to quench the Spirit of God. Some quench it with the business of this world; some quench it with the lusts of the flesh; some quench it with the cares of the mind; some quench it with long delays, that is, not plying the motion when it cometh, but crossing the good thoughts with bad thoughts, and doing a thing when the Spirit saith, Do it not; as Ahab went to battle after he was forbidden. Sometime a man shall feel himself stirred to a good work, as though he were led to it by the hand; and again, he shall be frighted from some evil thing, as though he were reproved in his ear; then, if he resist, he shall straight feel the Spirit going out of him, and hear a voice pronouncing him guilty, and he shall hardly recover his peace again. Therefore Paul saith, 'Grieve not the Spirit,' Eph. iv. 30; shewing that the Spirit is often grieved before it be quenched; and that when a man begins to grieve, and check, and persecute the Spirit, lightly he never ceaseth until he have quenched it; that is, until he seem to have no spirit at all, but walketh like a lump of flesh.

After *Quench not the Spirit*, followeth *Despise not prophesying*. In the end of this epistle, Paul speaketh like a father which is come to the end of his life; who, because he hath but a while to speak, heapeth his lessons together, which he would have his sons remember when he is gone. So Paul, as though he were set to give good counsel, and had not leisure to speak that he would, sendeth the Thessalonians a brief of his mind, which their meditation should after amplify and expound unto them.

His first advice is, 'Quench not the Spirit;' that is, when a good motion cometh, welcome it like a friend, and cross it not with thy lusts. The second admonition teacheth how the first should be kept, 'Despise not prophesying;' and the Spirit will not quench, because prophesying doth kindle it. The third admonition teacheth

how to make fruit of the second. Try the doctrines of them which prophesy, and thou shall not believe error for truth, but hold the best. The fourth admonition is the sum of all, and it cometh last, because it is longest in learning; that is, 'Abstain from all appearance of evil.' This is the sum of all; for he which can abstain not only from evil, but from the appearance of evil, is so perfect as a man can be in this sinful life. Put all these together, and it is as if Paul should say, Quench not the Spirit by despising of prophesying; neither despise prophesying, because all do not prophesy alike; but rather, when you hear some preach one way, and some another, when you see some follow him, and others follow him, do you try the doctrines by the Scripture, as the men of Berea did, Acts xvii. 11, and choose that which is best, and soundest, and truest, having alway such an eye to the truth, that you abstain from all appearance of error. So jealous the Holy Ghost would have us of our faith, that we set no article upon our religion, but that which is an undoubted truth; as Moses did nothing in the tabernacle but that which was shewed in his pattern. It seems that there were some among the Thessalonians, as there be amongst us, which did forsake all religion, because the preachers did not agree, or because the lives of professors gave some offence; therefore Paul sheweth, that there is no cause why they should mislike the word for the preacher, or why they should despise religion for the professor, because the word and the religion are not theirs which teach it, and profess it, but God's, and therefore cannot be polluted by them, no more than God. Then he concludeth, that seeing it is necessary that there shall be always errors and heresies to try us, we should also try them, and thereby be provoked so much the more from error, or heresy, or superstition, that we abstain even from the appearance thereof, lest we fall into the sin; that is the scope of these words.

*Despise not prophesying.* This admonition is, as it were, the keeper of the former; for by prophesying the Spirit is kindled, and without prophesying the Spirit is quenched; and therefore after 'Quench not the Spirit,' Paul saith, 'Despise not prophesying,' shewing that as our sin doth quench the Spirit, so prophesying doth kindle it. This you may see in the disciples that went to Emmaus, of whom it is said, when Christ preached unto them out of the law and the prophets, the Spirit was so kindled with his prophesying, that their hearts waxed hot within them, Luke xxiv. 32. This you see again in Saul's messengers which were sent for David, when they came among the prophets, and heard them prophesy, their spirit

was so kindled that they could not choose but prophesy also, 1 Sam. xix. 20; insomuch that Saul came after himself, and hearing the prophets, as they did, the Spirit came upon him likewise, and he prophesied too; whereupon it was said, 'Is Saul also among the prophets?' 1 Sam. ix. 25. This is no marvel, that the spirit of man should be so kindled, and revived, and refreshed with the word; for the word is called the food of the soul, Heb. v.; take away the word from the soul, and it hath no food to eat; as if you should take food from the body, the body would pine. And therefore Solomon saith, 'Without visions the people perish,' Prov. xxix. 18; that is, without prophesying the people famish. Therefore he which loveth his soul, had not need to despise prophesying, for then he famisheth his own soul, and is guilty of her death; therefore that pastor, or that patron, which is the cause why any place doth want preaching, is guilty of their destruction, because he which taketh or keepeth away the food, doth famish the body. The apostle might have said, Love prophesying, or honour prophesying, but he saith, 'Despise not prophesying.' And why doth he forbid to despise prophesying? why did Christ say, 'The poor receive the gospel,' Mat. xi. 5, but to shew, that the rich did contemn it? Why doth Paul say, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel,' Rom. i. 16, but to shew that many are ashamed of it? Even so he saith, 'Despise not prophesying;' shewing, that the greatest honour which we give to prophets, is not to despise them; and the greatest love which we carry to the word is not to loathe it. If we do not despise the preachers, then we think that we honour them enough; and if we do not loathe the word, then we think that we love it enough; therefore the apostle saith, 'Despise not prophesying,' but honour prophesying. *Prophesying* here doth signify preaching, as it doth in Rom xii. 6. Will you know why preaching is called prophesying? To add more honour and renown to the preachers of the word, to make you receive them like prophets; and then Christ saith, 'You shall have a prophet's reward,' Mat. x. 41; that is, not such a reward as you give, but such a reward as God giveth.

Lastly, If you mark, Paul saith not, despise not *prophets*, but *prophesying;* signifying, that from the contempt of the prophets, at last we come to despise prophesying too, like the Jews, who, when they were offended with the prophet, charged him to prophesy no more, Jer. xi. 21. Therefore, as Christ warned his disciples to hear the Scribes and Pharisees, although they did not as they taught, Mat. xxiii. 3; so Paul warneth the Thessalonians, that if any prophets among them do not as they teach, and therefore seem worthy to be

despised, like the Scribes and Pharisees, yet that they take heed that they do not despise prophesying for the prophets. Because the preachers are despised before the word be despised, therefore we will speak first of their contempt.

Christ asked his disciples what they thought of him, Mat. xvi. 13, so I would ask you, what you think of preachers. Is he a contemptible person which bringeth the message of God, which hath the name of an angel, 2 Cor. v. 20, and all his words are messengers of life? Prophets are of such account with God, that it is said, Amos iii. 7, 'God will do nothing before he reveals it unto his prophets;' so prophets are, as it were, God's counsellors. Again, kings, and priests, and prophets, were figures of Christ; all these three were anointed with oil, to shew that they had greater graces than the rest; but especially the prophets are called men of God, 1 Kings xiii. 1, to shew, that all which are of God will make much of prophets for God's sake. Therefore women are forbidden to take upon them to prophesy, 1 Cor. xiv. 34, lest that noble calling should become vile and despised by such unskilful handlers of it. Therefore when the prophet Elisha would send for Naaman the leper to come unto him, these were his words, Naaman 'shall know that there is a prophet in Israel,' 2 Kings v. 8: as though all the glory of Israel were chiefly in this, that they had prophets, and others had none; as if one parish should triumph over another, because they have a preacher, and the other have none. Therefore when this prophet was dead, Joash the king came unto his corpse, and wept over his face, and cried, 'O my father, my father! the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen of the same!' 2 Kings xiii. 14; shewing that the chariots, and horses, and soldiers, do not so safeguard a city, as the prophets which teach it, and pray for it. Therefore when God would mark the Israelites with a name of greatest reproach, he calleth them a people which rebuke their priests, as if he should say, usurpers of the priest's office, for they rebuke their priests, which are appointed to rebuke them.

How joyful and glad was Lydia when she could draw Paul and Silas to her house: 'If you think me to be faithful,' saith she, 'come to my house,' Acts xvi. 15, shewing that never any guests were so welcome to her house before. How tender was the Shunamite over Elisha, that she built an house to welcome him, and to keep him with her, 2 Kings iv. 10; thinking all the places in her house too bad for him, she built him a new room to make him stay with her. How much did the Galatians make of Paul, that he saith, they would pull out their own eyes to do him good, Gal. iv. 15; so once a pro-

phet was esteemed like a prophet. And hath he bid you despise them now, which bade you honour them before? No; Paul chargeth us to receive our teachers as he was received himself, saying, 'He which laboureth in the word is worthy of double honour,' 1 Tim. v. 17, that is, the preacher, after a sort, is more to be honoured than the ruler, for Aaron was the elder brother, but Moses was the younger brother; and therefore, if there be any appendix, the magistrate is the appendix, for if Aaron's Urim and Thummim would have served, Exod. xxviii. 30, Moses's rod and staff should not have needed; but when the tongue could not persuade, the rod did compel, and so came in the magistrate. As Paul sheweth the Thessalonians how the preachers of the word should be honoured, so he teacheth the Philippians how to honour their teachers, saying, 'Receive him in the Lord with great gladness, and make much of such,' Philip. ii. 29; that is, shew yourselves so glad of him, that he may be glad of you. Have you need to be taught why Paul would have you make much of such? Because they are like lamps, which consume themselves to give light to others, so they consume themselves to give light to you; because they are like a hen, which clucketh her chickens together from the kite, so they cluck you together from the serpent; because they are like the shout which did beat down the walls of Jericho, Josh. vi. 20, so they beat down the walls of sin; because they are like the fiery pillar which went before the Israelites to the land of promise, so they go before you to the land of promise; because they are like good Andrew, which called his brother to see the Messias, John i. 41, so they call upon you to see the Messias; and therefore make much of such.

If we should make much of prophets, how much should we make of prophesying! If we should love our instructors, how much should we love instruction! Simeon keeping in the temple met with Christ, Luke ii. 28; so many hearing the word, have met with knowledge, have met with comfort, have met with peace, have met with salvation; but without the word never any was converted to God. Therefore, whensoever the word is preached, every one may say to himself, as the disciples said to the blind man, 'Be of good comfort, he calleth thee,' Mark x. 49; be of good comfort, the Lord calleth thee; but when the word is not preached, then every man may say to himself, Beware, the devil calleth thee. When the prophets went from Jerusalem, the sword, and famine, and pestilence, and all the plagues of God rained upon them, even as fire came upon Sodom so soon as Lot was gone out, Gen. xix. 24; therefore what may those lands fear, which use their prophets as the Jews

used those which were sent to them? Amos calleth it an evil time, wherein the prudent keep silence, chap. v. 13, therefore this is an evil time, wherein the prudent are silent.

There be two trades in this land, without the which the realm cannot stand: the one is the king's soldiers, and the other is the Lord's soldiers; and the Lord's soldiers are handled like the king's soldiers; for, from the merchant to the porter, no calling is so despised, so contemned, so derided, that they may beg for their service, for their living is turned into an alms. One saith, that Moses is *quis*, that is, the magistrate is somebody; but Aaron is *quasi quis*, that is, the minister is nobody, because nobody is despised like him. Receive a prophet in the name of a prophet! Nay, receive a prophet in the name of an enemy, as Ahab received Elias, 'Art thou here, mine enemy?' 1 Kings xxi. 20. If Paul had lived in our days, he would not have said, 'Despise not the prophets,' but 'Persecute not the prophets;' for he should have seen not only despisers of the prophets, but mockers of them; not only mockers of, but slanderers of them: not only slanderers, but hunters, and biters, and smiters of them. Joseph was troubled so soon as he began to feed his father's sheep, Gen. xxxvii. 4, so the pastors are troubled so soon as they begin to feed their Father's sheep. Every man thinks to find friends against them; and though there be no law to hurt them, yet no man fears to accuse them; because authority doth disfavour them, they cannot tell how to preach, nor what to say, because there be so many Ahabs which would have them say that which pleaseth them, though it be not true, 1 Kings xxii. 13. Charm the charmer never so sweetly, let his song be never so pleasant, yet many adders are ready to stop their ears, and stop his mouth, like a bird which is smitten in her song, of the archer whom she singeth unto. Even as Saul let his spear fly at David while he played upon the harp to solace, and comfort, and drive the evil spirit from him, 1 Sam. xviii. 10; so while we play upon David's harp to solace, and comfort, and drive the evil spirit from you, many let the darts of reproach and the arrows of slander fly at us, saying, as the woman said to Elijah, 'If thou hadst not been, my child had not died,' 1 Kings xviii. 10; if we had not been, their peace had not died; if we had not been, their sports had not died; if we had not been, their customs, and their titles, and their honours had not died. And why should not Herod and Archelaus die, which sought the death of the child? Mat. ii. 15. Why should not any custom, or honour, or pleasure die, which seeketh the death of religion? 'Alas,' saith Jeremiah, 'what have

I done that all men should curse me?' Jer. xv. 10. If we do preach but the truth, you should not hate us for the truth. Now Obadiah had need to hide the prophets again to save them out of prison, 1 Kings xviii. 3, 4. Where is Rahab, that she might convey away the servants of God? Joshua ii. 1. Once Baal's prophets were punished, 1 Kings xviii. 40, but now Christ's prophets are punished. Once they did ask, 'Where is the seer, that he may teach us?' 1 Sam. ix. 9, but now they ask, Where is the seer, that we may take him? Once they did build houses for the prophets, like the Shunamite, 2 Kings iv. 10, but now they take their houses from them, and think they do God service when they make them, and their wives, and their children, and their servants, beggars. Once Paul said to Timothy, 'Let no man despise thy youth,' 1 Tim. iv. 12, shewing that preachers should not be despised for their youth; but now they despise the young prophets and the old too. How is the double honour turned to single honour! Nay, how is our honour turned to dishonour! 'If I be a master,' saith God, 'where is my fear?' Mal. i. 6; so, if we be prophets, where is our reverence? Doth not the contempt of the prophets cry unto God, as well as the blood of Abel? Gen. iv. 10. When the messengers which were sent unto the vineyard for fruit were beaten of them which should have laden them, then it is said that the lord of the vineyard waxed wroth, and said that he would let out the vineyard to others, which should yield him the fruits thereof, Mat. xxi. 43. The meaning hereof is this, that when the preachers and teachers which Christ sendeth to his church for fruits are abused and persecuted of them whom they call to the banquet, then he will remove their light and his gospel to others, which will yield him the fruits thereof. Therefore, what may this land fear, which hath used Christ's ambassadors as Ammon used David's ambassadors? 1 Chron. xix. 4. Jerusalem is left without one prophet, because she despised him. Sodom was burned, because she despised Lot; and the whole world was drowned, because it despised Noah; and are not these examples written for our warning? The time came that Saul sought for a prophet, and God would not answer him by prophets, because he had despised his prophets before, 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. So the time cometh when you shall ask, Where is the seer? and they shall say, He is rapt away like Elijah, 2 Kings ii. 11. A prophet was amongst us, but when he was despised in Jerusalem, he was sent to Nineveh. Is not judgment begun already? Doth not the gospel stand at the door, as if she were ready to take her leave? Are we not come from despising of prophets almost to the despising of prophesying

too? Do not many run unto the rulers, as young Joshua ran to Moses, and cry, Masters, forbid them to prophesy? Do not many walk in the streets while we preach in the temple? The beasts came to the ark to save themselves, Gen. vii. 9; and will not men come to the church to save themselves? But we may cry unto them as the children did unto their fellows in the market, 'We have piped unto you, and ye would not dance; we have lamented for you, and ye would not mourn,' Mat. xi. 17. Some come to hear us as Naaman came to Elisha; when the prophet had told him what he should do, he mocked him for it; he thought that he knew a better way than that himself, 2 Kings v. 11. So they come to hear us, but they think they can teach us; but they must remember that Paul saith, 'God hath chosen the foolish to confound the wise,' 1 Cor. i. 27. Therefore, if they think themselves wise, let them think us those fools whom God hath chosen to confound them; for although at all other times we are plain and simple as Jacob, yet at this time we have a promise, and it is given to us for your sake to speak sometime that which we conceive not ourselves, because the hour is come wherein God hath appointed to call some of you, as he hath done some of you before. Therefore, as the princely spirit came upon Saul when he should reign, to teach him how he should rule, 1 Sam. xi. 6, so the prophetical spirit cometh upon preachers when they should teach, to teach them how they should speak. Therefore, as Christ was contented to be baptized of John, Mat. iii. 18, so be you contented to be instructed of us, that if we be more simple than you, the glory of God may appear more in converting you by us.

Hath not this despising of the preachers almost made the preachers despise preaching? The people's neglect of the prophets hath made the prophets neglect prophesying. The non-resident keeps himself away, because he thinks the people like him better because he doth not trouble them; and the drone never studieth to preach, for he saith that an homily is better liked of than a sermon; and they which would study divinity above all, when they look upon our contempt, and beggary, and vexation, turn to law, to physic, to trades, or anything, rather than they will enter this contemptible calling. And is not the ark, then, ready to depart from Israel?

Now, if you will know what makes prophets and prophesying so despised, you may see first in Jeroboam's priests. It is said that Jeroboam made Israel to sin, 1 Kings xv. 26; that is, Jeroboam made Israel to contemn religion, because he made priests of the

basest of the people, 1 Kings xiii. 33; therefore they which make priests like Jeroboam's priests, make the people contemn the priests and religion too. Why might none carry the ark but the Levites? Deut. x. 8. Was it not lest the ark (which was a sign of God) should be despised? Therefore none should meddle with the word (which is the law of God) but they which are fit, lest they make it despised. Hannah said, 'I will not offer the child to God before he be weaned,' 1 Sam. i. 22, that is, before he be taken from the dug; but now they offer their children to God before they be weaned, before they can go, before they can speak; and send them to fight the Lord's battles before they have one stone in their hand to sling at Goliah, that is, one scripture to resist the tempter, Mat. iv. This is either because the patrons or the bishops have lime upon their fingers, which makes them like blind Isaac, Gen. xxvii. 11, that they take no heed whom they bless.

The second thing which makes prophets and prophesying despised, is the lewdness and negligence of them that are able to do well in their ministry, and yet do contrary. It is said of Hophni and Phinehas, that by their corrupt sacrificing they made the people abhor the sacrifice, 1 Sam. ii. 17; so many, by their slubbering of the word (for want of study and meditation), do make men think that there is no more wisdom in the word of God than they shew out of it; and therefore they stay at home, and say, they know as much as the preacher can teach them.

There is a kind of preachers risen up but of late, which shroud and cover every rustical, and unsavoury, and childish, and absurd sermon, under the name of the simple kind of teaching, like the popish priests, which make ignorance the mother of devotion; but indeed, to preach simply is not to preach rudely, nor unlearnedly, nor confusedly, but to preach plainly and perspicuously, that the simplest man may understand what is taught, as if he did hear his name. Therefore, if you will know what makes many preachers preach so barely, and loosely, and simply, it is your own simplicity, which makes them think, that if they go on and say something, all is one, and no fault will be found, because you are not able to judge in or out; and so because they give no attendance to doctrine, as Paul teacheth them, 1 Tim. iv. 16, it is almost come to pass, that in a whole sermon the hearer cannot pick out one note more than he could gather himself. Wheat is good, but they which sell the refuse of wheat are reproved, Amos viii. 6; so preaching is good, but this refuse of preaching is but like swearing: for one takes the name of God in vain, and the other takes the word of God in vain.

As every sound is not music, so every sermon is not preaching, but worse than if we should read an homily. In Jer. xlviii. there is a curse upon them which do the business of the Lord negligently. If this curse do not touch them which do the chiefest business of the Lord negligently, truly I cannot tell whom the prophet meaneth. These would not have prophesying despised, and yet they make it despised themselves.

The last thing which makes prophets and prophesying despised is, the diversity of minds. While one holdeth one way, and another another way, some leave all, and will be of no religion, until both parties agree; as if a patient should pine himself, and eat no meat at all, because one physician saith that this meat will hurt him, and another saith that meat will hurt him. These are the three enemies which make us and our labours despised.

Now, what shall we answer to our despisers? 'Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy,' saith the church, 'for I shall be raised,' Micah vii. 8; so, despise not the prophets, O ye Israelites, for they shall be honoured. Peter saith to Ananias and Sapphira, 'You have not lied unto men, but unto God,' Acts v. 3; so you have not despised man, but God: for Christ saith, 'He which despiseth you, despiseth me,' Luke x. 16. When Satan slew Job's servants, his malice was against Job, Job i. 16; so, when you despise God's servants, your presumption is against God: for 'that which you do unto them,' saith Christ, 'you do unto me,' Mat. x. Why then, if they despise Christ, Christ will despise them; for he told Saul that he spurned against the prick, that is, he spurned against that which would spurn against him. Therefore, if you give unto Christ when you give unto the poor, and if you honour Christ when you honour his prophets, then, as you give to the poor for Christ's sake, so despise not the prophets for Christ's sake. If, for all this, we must be despised still, then this is our remedy: Paul saith, 'Whatsoever we are to you, yet we are a sweet savour to God, both in them which are saved, and them which perish,' 2 Cor. ii. 15; that is, though we bring him word that you will not come to the banquet, yet we shall be welcome without you. And so much of that.

After *Despise not prophesying*, followeth *Try all things*, as if he should say, Despise not prophesying, but for all that try prophesying, lest thou believe error for truth; for as among rulers there be bad rulers, so among prophets there be false prophets. This made Christ warn his disciples to beware of the leaven of the pharisees, that is, of their false doctrine, Mark viii. 15. This made John say, 'Try the spirits,' 1 John iv. 1. And therefore we read, in Acts

xvii. 11, how the men of Berea would not receive Paul's doctrine before they had tried it; and how did they try it? It is said that they searched the Scripture. This is the way which Paul would teach you to try others, whereby he was tried himself; whereby we may see that if you use to read the Scriptures, you shall be able to try all doctrines: for the word of God is the touchstone of everything, like the light which God made to behold all his creatures, Gen. i. 2. So is the Scripture to decide all questions: every doubt must come to the word, and all controversies must be ended at this tribunal. The Scripture must speak which is right, and which is wrong; which is truth, and which is error; and all tongues must keep silence to hear it. So God hath appointed that the judge of our controversies, which, he saith in John xii. 48, shall judge us in the last day. Here a man may ask, If it be so that God would have us to try all our religion by the Scripture, and not by fathers, nor by doctors, nor by councils, nor by angel, nor by pope, how then do the papists say we must believe as the church believeth, and never look in the Scripture whether our teachers say as God saith, but take it upon their credit, as a blind man eateth his meat?

A man trieth his horse, which must bear him, and shall he not try his faith, which must save him? Paul saith, 'Let every one be able to give a reason of his faith.' Is this a reason of our faith to say, I believe so, because Rome believeth so, or rather, because that the word doth teach me so? It will not answer for them which die in heresy to say, The priests taught us so; no more than it would excuse Eve to say, The serpent taught her so, Gen. iii. 13: for God saith, 'Be not deceived,' neither by serpent, nor by prophet, nor by angel. Therefore I conclude with Paul, 'Despise not prophesying,' lest the gospel be taken from you; and yet, 'try prophesying,' lest you receive error for truth.

As we are to try doctrines, so Paul would have us to try our thoughts, and our speeches, and our actions; therefore he saith, 'Try all things.' He doth not bid us take a taste of all sins and vanities, as Solomon did, to try them; for they are tried already: but that we should set the word of God alway before us like a rule, and believe nothing but that which it teacheth, love nothing but that which it prescribeth, hate nothing but that which it forbiddeth, do nothing but that which it commandeth, and then we try all things by the word. As the eunuch said, 'How should I understand without an interpreter?' Acts viii. 31, so thou mayest say, 'How should I try without the word, which is the touchstone of good and evil?

Now, when we have tried by the word which is truth and which is error, what should we do then? 'Keep that which is best:' that is, stay at the truth, as the wise men stayed when they came to Christ. We must keep and hold the truth, as a man grippeth a thing with both his hands; that is, defend it with thy tongue, maintain it with thy purse, further it with thy labour, in danger and trouble, and loss and displeasure, come life, come death; think, as Christ did seal the truth with his blood, so thou must seal it with thy blood, or else thou dost not keep it, but let it go. Well doth Paul put *try* before *choose*, for he which trieth may choose the best, but he which chooseth before he try, takes the worse sooner than the best, and therefore the pope's priests, because the people should take superstition before religion, will never let them have the touch-stone, but keep them from the Scripture, and lock it up in an unknown tongue, which they cannot skill of, lest they should try their doctrines, like the men of Berea, Acts xvii, making religion a craft, as men call their trades. Therefore, as Josiah rejoiced that the book of God was found again, so we may rejoice that the book of God is found again, for when the people might not read it, it was all one as if they had lost it.

After *Try all things* and *keep the best*, followeth *Abstain from all appearance of evil;* as if he should say, That is like to be best which is so far from evil that it hath not the appearance of evil; and that is like to be the truth, which is so far from error that it hath not the show of error; whereby he sheweth that nothing should be brought into the church, or added to our religion, but that which is undoubted truth, without suspicion of error. It is not enough to be persuaded of our faith, but we must be assured of it; for religion is not built upon doubts, but upon knowledge. Here we may marvel why Paul biddeth us abstain from all appearance of evil, because sin, and heresy, and superstition are hypocrites; that is, sin hath the appearance of virtue, and heresy hath the appearance of truth, and superstition hath the appearance of religion. But by this the apostle doth note that there is no sin, nor heresy, nor superstition, but, if the visor be taken away from it, it will appear to be a sin, and heresy, and superstition, though at the first sight the visor do make it seem none, because it covereth the evil, like a painted sepulchre upon worms and rotten bones.

Hereby we are taught to judge of all things as they are, and not as they seem to be. As we draw aside the curtain before we behold the picture, so we must remove our prudence and all surmises, and then behold the thing naked as it is, if we will know it indeed.

Here I might admonish them which separate themselves from our church. As Paul saith, 'Examine whether you be in the faith,' so examine whether you have the show of error. Hath it not the show of error to broach a religion which was never heard of before? Hath it not the show of error to retain an opinion which the author himself hath recanted, as though ye would suck up that which the dog hath vomited? Hath it not the show of error to affirm that those preachers may not be heard, which (by their own confessions) have converted them to the knowledge of God, and daily convert others? Hath it not the show of error to affirm that the Lord's prayer may not be used for a prayer, which for anything that we or they can read, was so used from the beginning?

Hath it not the show of error to say that no man may use any set prayer, seeing there be many set prayers, and psalms, and blessings in the holy Scripture, which were used in the same form? Hath it not the show of error to affirm that we have no church, and yet to grant that our martyrs which died in popery were true members of the church? Hath it not the show of error to affirm that two or three may excommunicate all the rest without a minister, seeing the pastor is the mouth of the church? Hath it not the show of error to affirm that the church of Christ was ever invisible before this age, and that it is such a small flock as their number is, and that it hath set foot nowhere but in England? Hath it not the show of error to hold that for good and sound religion which is altered every day, adding and detracting, as though a man should make a religion of his own invention, so fast as new conceits come into his brain? Let them think what Paul saith unto them, 'Be wise unto sobriety,' Rom. xii. 3, and suspect that construction which yourselves devised; for Solomon saith, There is an error upon the right hand as well as upon the left, Prov. iv. 27; that is (as I may call it), the zealous error; and if this be not, I know none within this land.

Yet shall I say that we have not the show of error? Nay; I would we were but in the show of error. I may not call evil good, no more than I may call good evil; and therefore let us pull out the beam out of our own eyes, as we would pull the mote out of their eyes. If Paul would have us abstain from every appearance of evil, sure he would have us abstain from heresy and idolatry, for these are the greatest evils. But if we be not idolaters, yet we have the show of idolatry. If we be not of antichrist's religion, yet we are of antichrist's fashion, so long as we have the same vestures, and the same orders, and the same titles that antichrist knoweth his minis-

ters by. It is said that the serpent's sting is in her tail, and so it seems; for this tail of antichrist (which the pope hath left behind him like an evil savour) is unto us as the remnant of the Canaanites were unto the Jews, Num. xxxiii. 55. They should have destroyed all the Canaanites, but because they spared some, therefore they whom they left were goads in their sides and pricks in their eyes, that they could never be in quiet for them. So we should have expelled the head and the tail too of antichrist; but because we did not, therefore the remnants of popery are goads in our sides and pricks in our eyes, that we cannot yet be in quiet for them. Therefore let us pray that he which hath taken away the evil, will take away the show of evil too.

# THE WEDDING GARMENT.

# THE WEDDING GARMENT.

*Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.*—ROM. XIII. 14.

I HAVE chosen a text which is the sum of the Bible. For all Scripture runneth upon Christ, like the title of a book, because he is Alpha and Omega, Rev. i. 8, the beginning and the end of man's salvation; therefore he is figured in the law, foretold in the prophets, and fulfilled in the gospel. Some places point to his divinity, some to his humanity, some to his kingdom, some to his priesthood, some to his prophecy, some to his conception, some to his birth, some to his life, some to his miracles, some to his passion, some to his resurrection, some to his ascension, some to his glorification; all point to the Saviour, like John Baptist, when he said, 'This is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world,' John i. 29. Therefore learn Christ and learn all. Now, to teach us how we should hear, and how we should love, and how we should fear, and how we should believe, and how we should follow Christ, that we may know when we have learned him, the apostle saith, 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ;' as though this word did contain all our duties unto Christ, to put him on; which seems to be the level of this phrase, if you mark how it cometh in. For before, ver 12, Paul saith, 'Cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light;' then he nameth the works of darkness which we should cast off, ver. 13; that is, gluttony, drunkenness, strife, envy, chambering, wantonness; after he nameth the armour of light, which we should put on, and calleth it by the name of the giver, the Lord Jesus Christ, ver. 14. Instead of gluttony, and drunkenness, and strife, and chambering, and wantonness, and other patches of the devil, wherewith man clotheth himself as with a garment, Ps. cix. 18, the apostle giveth him another garment, which he calleth Jesus Christ.

He doth not oppose virtue to vice, as one would think, when he had said, Cast off gluttony, he should have said, Put on sobriety; when he had said, Cast off wantonness, he should have said, Put on continency; when he said, Cast off envy, he should have said, Put on love. But instead of all virtues he commendeth the example of Christ for every virtue, and opposeth it to every vice; as if he should say, He which thinketh only to follow Christ, needeth not to be led by the hand from virtue to virtue, but his example will teach him what he shall follow, and what he shall fly, better than all the precepts in the world. Therefore this is the best thought in every action, for a man to think what Christ would do, which was made not only redemption and salvation to save us, but wisdom and example to guide us, 1 Cor. i. 30. Therefore, he saith, 'Learn of me,' and 'Follow me,' Mat. xi. 29, Mark x. 21; as though we should think before we speak, whether he would speak so, and consider before we do, whether he would do so, and do all by his example, as the scholar writeth by his copy; or else we do not learn of him, but of ourselves; and then we go away, like a child which scribbleth without a rule. If thou resolvest to speak and do no otherwise than Christ would speak and do himself, thou shalt be sure to do all things well, because thou followest a straight pattern; therefore study what this meaneth, to put on Christ. It is a strange speech and a strange garment. They which cannot tell (like Nicodemus) what Christ meaneth when he saith, that we must be born again, John iii. 4, cannot tell what Paul meaneth when he saith, 'Put on Christ,' as if one should put on another. I think many here may go to the apostle, as the apostles went to Christ, and ask of him, Master, expound to us what is this parable.

This phrase is read in none but Paul, which hath written most of justification by Christ; and therefore he useth all fit phrases to express how we should apply Christ unto us, and in no terms he hath shewed it more lively than in this phrase, 'Put on Christ;' for it signifieth that Christ doth cover us like a garment, and defend us also safely like an armour. He hideth our unrighteousness with his righteousness, he covereth our disobedience with his obedience, he shadoweth our death with his death, that the wrath of God cannot find us, judgment cannot spy us, the curse cannot see us, for the garment which covereth and hideth us. But as Jacob got a blessing in the name and apparel of Esau his elder brother, Gen. xxvii. 23; so in the name and apparel of Christ our elder brother, we receive the blessing, and are received into favour like Christ himself. For God saith not, This is my beloved Son which pleaseth

me; but, in whom I am pleased, Mat. iii. 17; meaning, that not only Christ pleaseth God, but we please God in Christ; for Christ is our head, 1 Cor. xi. 3, Eph. v. 23.

Therefore, as one looking in the face of a man, doth like him straight if he like his face; so God, beholding us in the face of Christ, doth love us straight, because his face doth please him. But Christ is not our head unless we be his members; Christ is not our garment, unless we put him on; as Christ did put on our garment when he clothed himself with our flesh, and took our infirmities, and bore our curse; so we must put on his garment, that is, his righteousness, his merits, and his death, which is as strange a virtue to us, as our flesh was to him, and much ado we have to put it on; and when it is on, there is a great cunning to wear it cleanly and comely from soiling and renting, Rev. iii. 4, that such a precious garment be not taken from us again, Mat. xxii. 11.

Therefore many seem to wear this garment which shall be thrust from the banquet, Mat. vii. 23, because they wear it not; as those which will say, when the Lord shall come to judgment, We have seen thee in our streets, we have heard thee in our synagogues, we have prophesied, we have cast out devils, we have wrought miracles by thy name, Luke xiii. 26; as though if any had put him on, or borne his marks, they were the men which were marked like his servants; therefore who but they shall enter into heaven? Yet Christ saith, 'I know you not,' ver. 27; there is their reward, I know you not; as if he should answer, You wear not my livery, you bear not my cognisance for all your shows, therefore depart from me; so he put them off, because they had not put him on; for though they had seen his person, and heard of his virtues, yet they had no faith to apply his mercies, his merits, his death, and his righteousness unto them, without which no man can put on Christ, nor wear him. Faith is the hand which putteth him on. Faith taketh first his righteousness, and covereth her unrighteousness; then she taketh his obedience, and covereth her disobedience; then she taketh his patience, and covereth her impatience; then she taketh his temperance, and covereth her intemperance; then she taketh his continency, and covereth her incontinency; then she taketh his constancy, and covereth her inconstancy; then she taketh his faith, and covereth her diffidence; then she taketh his humility, and covereth her pride; then she taketh his love, and covereth her rancour; and so taketh one robe after another, and tricketh herself until she have put on Jesus Christ; that is, until she appear in the sight of God like Jesus Christ, clothed with his

merits and graces, that God hath no power to be angry with her, because she cometh so like his Son. This is to put on Jesus Christ, as you shall see more lively, when you have taken a view of the garment, for we are to speak of Christ the garment, and of our putting it on.

There be many fashions of apparel, but they are too light, or too heavy, or too coarse, or too stale, and all wear out. At last the apostle found a fashion that surpasseth them all; it is never out of fashion, meet for all seasons, fit for all persons, and such a profitable weed, that the more it is worn the fresher it is. What fashion have you seen comparable to this? It is not like the clothes of David's ambassadors, which covered their upper parts, 2 Sam. x. 4; nor like Saul's armour, which tired David when he should fight with it, 1 Sam. xvii. 39; nor like the counterfeit Jeroboam's wife, which disguised herself to go unknown, 1 Kings xiv. 2; nor like the old rags of the Gibeonites, which deceived Joshua, Joshua ix. 4, 5; nor like the paltry suit of Micah, which he gave once a year to his Levite, Judges xvii. 10; nor like the glutton's flaunt, which jetted in purple every day; nor like the light clothes which Christ said are in kings' courts, and make them lighter that wear them, Mat. xi. 8. But it is like the garment of the high priests, which had all the names of the tribes of Israel written upon his breast, Exod. xxviii. 21; so all the names of the faithful are written in the breast of Christ, and registered in the book of his merits, Mal. iii. 16. It is like Elias's mantle, which divided the waters, 2 Kings ii. 8; so he divided our sins and punishments, that they which are clothed with Christ, are armed both against sin and death. It is like the garments of the Israelites in the wilderness, which did not wear; forty years together they wandered in the desert, and yet, saith Moses, their shoes were not worn, but their apparel was as when they came out of Egypt, Deut. xxix. 5; so the righteousness of Christ doth last for ever, and his merits are never worn out. As Mordecai shined in the king's robes before the people, Esther vi. 11; so and more glorious are the faithful in the robes of Christ before God. When Christ was transfigured upon the mount, Matthew saith, that his face shined like the sun, and his clothes were as white as the light, Mat. xvii. 2; so when we are transfigured into the image of Christ, we shall shine before other men like lights; and therefore Christ's disciples are called lights, because they were clothed with light, and shined to the world, Mat. v. 14. Solomon was not so glorious in all his royalty, nor the lilies which are braver than Solomon, Mat. vi. 29, as he which is clothed with Christ,

because the apparel upon him is better than all the world about him. Therefore, if David said, 'Weep, ye daughters of Israel, for Saul which clothed you in purple,' 2 Sam. i. 24; I may say, Rejoice, ye daughters of Israel, for Christ which hath clothed you with righteousness, as it were with a vesture, before you come to the banquet.

This is the wedding garment, without which no man can feast with the Lord, Mat. xxii. 12. This garment is called an armour, Eph. vi. 11, because it defendeth us from all the assaults of the devil, the flesh, the world, the heat of persecution, and the cold of defection. This garment is called light, Rom. xiii. 12, because it is the beauty and glory of them which wear it. This garment is called a kingdom, because none but kings do wear it; that is, they are enthroned in the kingdom of Christ, and made kings over the world, the flesh, and Satan, which wear this garment; like the hair of Samson, which while he wore he was like a king, and all his enemies had no power to hurt him, Judges xvi. 6.

This garment Paul hath sent unto you, to go before the king of heaven and earth, a holy garment, a royal garment, an immaculate garment, an everlasting garment; a garment whereof every hem is peace of conscience, every plait is joy in the Holy Ghost, every stitch is the remission of some sin, and saveth him which weareth it. If she which touched the hem of Christ's garment was healed, Mat. ix. 21; he which wears this garment, nay, he which wears Christ himself, shall not he be healed of all his sores, though he were wounded from head to foot? You need not clothe him now which saith, 'When I was naked, you did not clothe me,' nor cast your garments in the way, as they did when he came to Jerusalem, but take his garment and suffer yourselves to be clothed, as Noah did, to cover your nakedness, Gen. ix. 23. As the good Samaritan put him upon his own beast which was spoiled with thieves, and bound up his sores when he was wounded, Luke x. 34;[1] so Christ Jesus mounteth the faithful upon his righteousness, and healeth their sins; as though he should cover them with his garments, whom the world, the flesh, and the devil have robbed of their garments, that is, the righteousness which they had in paradise before the serpent came, Gen. iii. 1; so if we put on Christ, we are clothed with his obedience, whereby our wickedness is covered; we are clothed with his merits, whereby our sins are forgiven; we are clothed with his Spirit, whereby our hearts are mollified, and sanctified, and renewed, till we resemble Christ himself. This is the apostle's meaning, to put on Christ, as it is unfolded in Col. iii.

[1] This Samaritan doth not signify Christ, but yet may be resembled to Christ.

12. Where he brings forth all the robes of Christ, and sorts of them, and saith, Put on mercy, put on meekness, put on humility, put on patience, put on love; all which before he called the new man. So that to put on Christ, is to put on the new man with all his virtues, until we be renewed to the image of Christ, which is like a new man amongst men. They which labour to be righteous, and yet believe that Christ's righteousness shall save them, have put on Christ as Paul would have them. We are not taught to put on angels, nor saints, nor the Virgin Mary, nor Paul himself, to cover our sins with their righteousness, as the papists do; but we are commanded to put on Christ, and cover our sins with his righteousness. The body hath many garments, but the soul hath one garment. Every clout will cover our sores, but the finest silk will not cover our sins. Therefore when we seem brave to others, we seem foul to God, because his eye is upon our sins, which lie naked when all the rest is covered, until we put on Christ, and then we hear the voice, 'Thy sins are forgiven,' Mat. ix. 2; and then we have that blessing, 'Blessed is the man whose sin is covered,' Ps. xxxii. 1; so we are clothed and blessed together. Yet this garment is out of request, too rough for some, too grave for others, too base for others. And therefore, instead of putting on Christ, they put him off; instead of welcoming him, they discharge him; like the Gadarenes, that they may keep their swine, that is, their beastly pleasures, which he would cast into the sea. These are like the foolish soldiers, which should have made Christ their garment, and they cast lots upon his garments, and divided them, and so spoiled them; so do the papists deal with this garment: they say it is not fit for them, and therefore they break it, and mangle it, and piece it with rags of their own inventions; they say it is too light, and not able to beat off the storms of death, and heat of hell, and therefore choose rather to make themselves garments of their merits and their masses, and their penance, and their pardons, and their pilgrimages; like Adam and Eve, which made themselves coats of figleaves, Gen. iii. 7, 21, which God destroyed again, to shew that when men have patched all their leaves of masses, of pardons, of pilgrimages, and satisfactions together, yet they will not cover their nakedness, nor keep off the heat of God's wrath; but are like the curtailed skirts of David's ambassadors, 2 Sam. x. 4, which hid not their shame. Therefore when we may go in our Master's attire, shall we scrub like beggars patched in our rags? Mine own garments defile me, saith Job, Job ix. 31. Our own garments, our own righteousness defileth us; for what garment, what righteousness

have we of our own, but that which is like a menstruous cloth, Isa. lxiv. 6, which had more need to be washed itself, than to wipe that which is foul? Therefore Christ must make us garments, or else when our backs flaunt it like courtiers, our souls shall strip like beggars; and the devils will sport themselves like Ham to see our nakedness, Gen. ix. 22. First, the Father made us garments in paradise, Gen. iii. 21; now the Son makes us garments in the wilderness; nay, the Son is made our garment, as Paul saith, 1 Cor. i. 30, 'Christ is made unto us righteousness;' that is, Christ's righteousness must be our garment, or else we shall be ashamed when our righteousness doth not reach to cover our nakedness, but still some part will peep bare until he cast his righteousness upon it, and then all is covered. As David needed no other armour against the giant than a sling, 1 Sam. xvii. 40; so we need no other garment against sin than Christ. There wants nothing but this to put it on. Now let us see how to put this garment on. Many fumble about it, like children which have need of one to put on their clothes. Some put on Christ like a precious head-tire, which all day is worn, beautified with jewels, and beset with gems, to make the face seem more amiable; but at night that riches is laid aside, and the head muffled with some regardless tire. Thus do our curious women put on Christ, who when they hear the messengers of grace offering this garment, and preparing to make the body fit to be garnished with so glorious a vesture, as Paul did the Romans, first washing away drunkenness and gluttony, then chambering and wantonness, then strife and envy, and so sin after sin, they seem like the stony ground to receive it with joy, and think to beautify their heads with this precious ointment; but when he tells them there is no communion between Christ and Belial, that if this garment be put on, all other vanities must be put off; they then turn their day into darkness, and reject Christ, that would be an eternal crown of beauty to their heads, and wrap their temples in the uncomely rags and refuse of every nation's pride; and in these toys they cause their servants to spend many hours on every day in the week, but especially on the Sabbath day, to deck their bodies, as if they were but little children, which had need of one to put on their clothes. Some put on Christ as a cloak, which hangeth upon their shoulders, and covereth them: when they go abroad to be seen of men, they can cast on the cloak of holiness, and seem for a while as holy as the best; but so soon as they come home the cloak goeth off, and the man is as he was, whose vizard was better than his face. Thus hypocrites put on Christ, as many retain unto

noblemen, not to do them any service, but to have their countenance. Many put on Christ like a hat, which goeth off to every one which meets them; so every temptation which meets them, makes them forget what they heard, what they promised, what they resolved, and change their way as though they had not repented at all. So the common people (like yourselves) put on Christ: they are zealous so long as they are in the church, and beat their breasts, and cast up their eyes like the publican, Luke xviii. 13, when they hear a sentence which moves them; as though they would do no more against that saying whiles they live; but the next business putteth all out of mind till they come to the church again. Some put on Christ as a glove, which covereth but the hand; so they put on the face of Christ, or the tongue of Christ; but their hands work, and their feet walk, as they did before. So many professors of religion put on Christ, which call but for discipline and reformation, that they might get a name of zeal and sincerity, to cover some fault which they would not be suspected of. Thus every man would cover himself with Christ, but they have not the skill, or they have not the will to put him on. What will you do then? Though the garment be never so good, yet it is not good to them that do not wear it; for what profit have we of the garments which we do not wear? they neither keep us from heat nor cold. Therefore Paul doth not bring you a garment to lay by you for the moths, but he bids you put it on. Here is the cunning now in putting it on. If Paul had taught us this, then you would hearken unto him. Well, you shall hear what Paul saith to the putting of it on.

First (saith Paul), you must cast away the works of darkness, and then put on the armour of light; first, you must put off, and then put on. As the eagle's feathers will not lie with any other feathers, but consume them which lie with them; so the wedding garment will not be worn with filthy garments, but scorns, like the ark, that Dagon should stand by it, 1 Sam. v. 8. If any man may not wear women's apparel for lightness, may he wear the devil's apparel, and clothe himself with pride, with covetousness, with envy, with hypocrisy, with uncleanness, and when he is like the devil, sit at God's table? No man (saith Christ) patcheth a new piece to an old garment, Mat. ix. 16; and wilt thou patch an old piece to a new garment? God forbade the people to wear linsey-woolsey, because it was a sign of inconstancy, Lev. xix. 19; but this is inconstancy itself.

He doth not put on Christ, but putteth off Christ, and putteth on Belial, which fashions himself to God and the world too. As Christ's coat was without seam, Mat. xix. 23, so they must be

without stain that wear it, Rev. iii. 5. For when a man putteth on fair clothes, he maketh himself fair too, and avoideth every foul thing, lest it should foul his clothes; so must he which putteth on Christ, for the finest garment is soonest stained. Therefore when thou hast put on this garment, thou must wash thyself, and pick thy way, and choose thy works, and handle nothing that is foul, for marring thy clothes; that is, thou must not think as thou didst, nor speak as thou didst, nor live as thou didst; but remember that thou hast changed thy master, and serve him with whom thou art bound. For if God and the devil could not agree upon Moses's body, Jude 9, for one to have one part, and the other another part, but God would have all; much less will God agree that the devil should have part of the soul, which would not yield him part of the body.

Thus have you heard what you must put off; now hear how Christ must be put on. As the angel taught John to read the book, when he bade him eat it, Rev. x. 9, so must we put on Christ, as if we did eat him, not as the papists do in their mass, but as the meat is turned into the substance of the body, and goeth through every part of man, so Christ and his word should go from part to part, from ear to heart, from heart to mouth, from mouth to hand, till we be of one nature with them, that they be the very substance of our thoughts, and speeches, and actions, as the meat is of our body. This is to eat Christ and his word; or else we do not eat them but chew them, and when our taste is satisfied, spue them out again. Thus we must put on Christ; for the word signifieth to put him on, as thou wouldest put him in, that he may be one with thee, and thou with him, as it were in a body together. As he hath put on all our infirmities, so we must put on all his graces, not half on, but all on, and clasp him to us, and gird him about us, and wear him, even as we wear our skin, which is alway about us. Then there shall be no need of wires, nor curls, nor periwigs; the husbands shall not be forced to rack their rents, nor enhance their fines, nor sell their lands to deck their wives; but as the poor mantle of Elijah seemed better to Elisha than all the robes of Solomon, 2 Kings ii. 13, so the wedding garment shall seem better than all the flaunts of vanity, and put every fashion out of fashion, which is not modest and comely like itself.

If you will know further how to put on Christ, you shall see how your text will catechise you in his three names, *Lord, Jesus, Christ.* The apostle seemeth to spell out the way unto us how we should wear this garment: First, we must put him on as *Lord;* then we

must put him on as *Jesus;* lastly, we must put him on as *Christ.* Thou must put him on as *Lord;* that is, thy ruler to command thee, thy tutor to govern thee, and thy master to direct thee; thou must be no man's servant but his, take no man's part against him, but say with the apostles, 'Whether is it meet to obey God or thee?' Acts iv. 19. Thou must put him on as *Jesus,* that is, thy Saviour in whom thou trustest, thy protector on whom thou dependest, thy Redeemer on whom thou believest; thou must not look for thy salvation from angel, nor saint, nor anything beside him. For the name of Jesus signifieth a Saviour, and is given to none but him,[1] and he is not only called the *Saviour,* but the *Salvation,* in the Song of Simeon, Luke i. 69, to shew that he is the only Saviour; for there be many saviours, but there can be but one salvation; as there may be many tortures, and yet but one death. Therefore, when he is called the *Salvation,* it implieth that there is no saviour beside him. Thou must put him on as *Christ,* that is, a king to rule, a prophet to teach, a priest to pray and sacrifice, and pacify the wrath of God for thee. For this name Christ doth signify that he was anointed a king, a priest, and a prophet for man: a king to rule him, a priest to offer sacrifice for him, a prophet to teach him. So that he putteth on Christ as *Lord,* which worshippeth none but him; he putteth on Christ as *Jesus,* which believeth in none but him; and he putteth on Christ as *Christ,* which worshippeth none but him, believeth in none but him, and heareth none but him.

You put on Christ first when you are baptized, Rom. vi. 3; then you were sealed and consecrated to his service; so soon as you came into the world, you vowed to renounce the world and follow God. How many have put on Christ thus, and since have put him off again? which have broken the first promise that ever they made, and were never faithful to God since? You put on Christ again when you are called and sanctified, that is, when you cast off the old man, which is corrupt with the lusts of the flesh, the pride of life, and the cares of this world, Eph. iv. 22; and put on the new man, which is regenerate in righteousness and holiness to the image of Christ, or likeness of Adam in his innocency, Rom. xii. 2; for to put on the new man is to become a new man, as if thou wert born again and conceived of the Holy Ghost. Of this Job speaketh when he saith, 'I put on justice, and it covereth me,' Job xxix. 14. You put on Christ again when you receive his holy sacrament, 1 Cor. x. 16, and are partakers of his body and blood, that is, the merits of his obedience and passion, by faith, which heareth him as if she

[1] Joshua hath the like name, but not from God, nor to that end.

did see him, and seeth him as if she did feel him, and feeleth him as if she did taste him, and tasteth him as if she did digest him; then Christ has become yours, and dwelleth in you, and feedeth you with his grace to eternal life, as the bread and wine sustaineth the life present. Lastly, when you have put on Christ in these three sorts, which is your garment for this world, after you shall put on Christ in heaven, and be clothed with his glory; and that shall be your last vesture, which shall never wear out, Philip. iii. 21, 1 Cor. xv. 49.

Thus have you heard what is meant by putting on Christ: first, to clothe ourselves with righteousness and holiness like Christ; and then, because our own righteousness is too short to cover our arms, and legs, and thighs of sin, but still some bare place will peer out, and shame us in the sight of God, therefore we must borrow Christ's garments, as Jacob did his brother's, Gen. xxvii. 15, and cover ourselves with his righteousness; that is, believe that his righteousness shall supply our unrighteousness, and his sufferings shall stand for our sufferings, because he came to fulfil the law, and bear the curse, and satisfy his Father for us, that all which believe in him might not die, but have life everlasting, John iii. 16.

Now I have shewed you this goodly garment, you must go to another to help you to put it on; and none can put this garment upon you, but he which is the garment, the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore to him let us pray.

# THE WAY TO WALK IN.

# THE WAY TO WALK IN.

*Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in gluttony and drunkenness, neither in chambering and wantonness, nor in strife and envying, &c.*—ROM. XIII. 13.

HAVING already shewed you a kingdom, now I will shew you wherein this kingdom consisteth, and in what it doth not consist; as in Rom. xiv., he sheweth that it consisteth not in meats, and drinks, &c., but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. But because I am to speak of some vices which this text calleth me unto, I will proceed in them, beseeching you, as you shall hear them to be condemned, so speedily to proceed in execution to put them to death, and so to go forward with the rest of your sins.

'Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in gluttony and drunkenness,' &c. As if he should say, Know you, that I bid you put away from you the works of darkness. He nameth not all the works of darkness, but chiefly those that do reign and are cause of more wickedness; that is, gluttony, drunkenness, strife, and envying, &c., three monsters come out of hell, and troubling the whole world; therefore, cast off these, and you have cast off all.

Now, to speak of them, I will begin where the vices begin, and, as I point them out unto you, so I pray you to slay them, as if you had martial law in your hands to put them to death. By this narration the apostle sheweth the chain of sin, how one sin will draw on another after it, for no sin is so base that it will go alone; wherefore resist all sins or none, for if you entertain one sin it will presently draw another after it, and so the whole house will be full of thieves: as Gehazi his pride made him to lie, and Adam's fall made him to excuse himself, and Peter's denial made him swear, and after his swearing, made him curse himself, &c.; for the sinner cannot stay after he hath committed one sin to commit another, nor till he hath come to the bottom of hell. If I should stand to anatomise and paint out all vices in their kind, I should crave a longer time than is allotted to me; therefore I will briefly touch them.

As huge as the sea is, yet one may taste the saltness of it in a drop, so in one sin you may see how ill-favoured all the rest be; for there is no sin but weakeneth the body, shorteneth the life, corrupteth and consumeth the goods, perverteth grace, and maketh us odious to God and angels. You are given to hate your enemies; these are they, therefore hate them; they keep you from repentance lest you should be saved; wherefore I will shew you what is in this box, lest the same go into your eyes, and so blind you.

'Walk not in gluttony, drunkenness. and strife,' &c. These come like fair ladies, with presents in their hands, to woo the unstable soul of man; gluttony cometh with the pleasure of the flesh, drunkenness with the satisfying of the thirst, strife with the revenge of the enemy.

And first, what gluttony and drunkenness offereth, and how many have been deceived with their sweet meats and strong drinks, till all have been turned into a belly, and so turned the body into sin, daily experience teacheth us.

Now, by the way, the apostle, we must note, doth approve sobriety and virtue, that as a man may drink and not be drunken, so he may eat that he loveth, and not glut himself; for he forbiddeth not to eat meat, but not to eat too much, lest thou surfeit; for the golden mean is good for all things. Solomon doth not forbid to eat honey, but eat not too much, lest thou surfeit. As the body may not offend the soul, so the soul may not injure the body, lest it be unfit to serve the soul.

Many there be that think they have not sinned in gluttony till they surfeit; but this is gluttony in excess, and punisheth itself with many diseases, and dulness of wit, want of memory, and shortness of life. Now, that you may sin in gluttony and not surfeit, appeareth by the rich man in the 16th of Luke, who fared deliciously every day, and never surfeited; yet for all that he is called glutton, to teach us that there be gluttons which do not surfeit. This kind of sin much displeaseth God, when men eat and drink, and rise up to play, and remember not the afflictions of Joseph and Lazarus lying at the door; many be such banquets, where none do come with a wedding garment, and where Christ is never invited. Many things may persuade us to temperance, and we may learn it of the beasts, who desire no change, nor hoard not, and are content. God provided meat for all creatures, as herbs, roots, and grass, before he provided any for man, to teach and instruct us what little care we should have for our belly; for we live not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of

God. Christ hath taught us to fast when he prepared himself thereunto in the wilderness, but he never by any example taught us to feast. Some there be which think he did never eat flesh but in the paschal lamb, which, although it doth not teach or debar us from eating flesh, which Peter was willed to eat in the vision, yet it teacheth us to tame the flesh, lest Hagar should get the upper hand of her mistress. When the belly is full, the flesh lusteth, the tongue prateth, the wit sleepeth, and Satan carrieth away the mind when the understanding is away. As the moist and waterish grounds bring forth nothing but frogs and toads, so the belly and waterish stomach that is stuffed like a tun, bringeth forth nothing but a drowsy mind, foggy thoughts, filthy speeches, and corrupt affections; therefore the physician saith, nothing better for the body than abstinence; the divine saith, nothing better for the soul than abstinence; the lawyer saith, nothing better for the wits than abstinence; but because there is no law for this vice, therefore it breaketh out so mightily. Whoredom hath a law, theft hath a law, murder hath a law, but this sin is without a law.

Now to the second sin, which is drunkenness, these are two sisters, betwixt whom there is little difference. In this sin some are mad, some are merry, some do vomit, some do sleep, and some do reel; and then there is no difference between a man and a beast, saving that the one can stand, and the other cannot. As every Scripture that maketh against theft, maketh against non-residency; so every reason which maketh against gluttony, maketh against drunkenness.

Now after these cometh chambering and wantonness; and no marvel, saith one, though the imps do follow, when the devil goeth before; for fulness of bread went before the sin of the Sodomites. So when David had dined, and was full, walking upon his palace, his eyes glanced, his flesh lusted, his heart consented, the fire burned, and there was no water to quench it. And therefore in that so great a champion as David did fall, let him that standeth take heed lest he fall. And seeing that thou in thyself art no stronger or mightier, imitate and follow the example of those that are cunning wrestlers, who, to cast down others, will first fall down themselves; so we, to overthrow our enemies, must subject ourselves, and humble ourselves first by fasting and prayer.

Sodom was burned, but the sins have escaped. Sweet words, soft attire, wanton behaviour, and such like, have conspired and agreed all together, and set honesty to sale. And we use daily to pray that we be not led into temptation, and yet we do lead ourselves into temptation. For our fair words, wanton gestures, and

dainty fare, with many other pleasures, do beckon unto sin; and if there be no wine, why hangs the bush? and if there be no wantons, why is there any wanton, or unseemly, or ungodly attire?

'Let us not walk in gluttony and drunkenness, neither in chambering and wantonness, nor in strife and envying.' It is hard to say which of these sins is most in the world. Haply some will say, I have been no glutton, no drunkard, no whoremonger, no murderer, no false image worshipper, &c.; but who can come forth and say he is free from strife? For strife hath compassed the whole world, strife in country, strife in city, strife in court, strife in commonweal, strife in the church; who can say that he is free from strife, or that he hath not injured his brother? Surely that man shall stand alone, for it will light upon none but Christ.

I can but exhort you with the apostle, that you would not walk in strife and envying. Therefore put away these amongst the rest; for he that hath not put off these, hath not put on Christ; and if he have not put on Christ, he is no Christian. Envy is sin, and it punisheth itself like gluttony; for it fretteth the heart, shorteneth the life, and eateth the flesh, as the fire consumeth the wood: it is the mother of strife, and a great worker in the court. This is it which brought labour, and sickness, and death into the world, even the envy of the serpent and the devil; and it will condemn thee in thy conscience, if thou be an envious man. Nothing resembleth God more than love, for God is love. So if thou hast love, thou resemblest God, but if thou hast envy, and art an adversary, thou resemblest the devil; for thou canst not come nearer the devil any way than to be envious. As the dust cometh by the wind, so the devil cometh with envy; and he that is possessed with envy, is possessed with the devil. Why doth the apostle say, in the third chapter of his epistle to the Colossians, 'Above all things put on love'? Because love is best of all. Why doth he call love 'the band of perfection'? Because it bindeth all virtues together. If love be the band of perfection to bind all virtues together, then envy is the band of impiety, to bind all sins together; therefore, if we must cast off all but love, we must cast off envy. Thou canst not come to the kingdom of peace without love. The kingdom of Satan is at peace, and shall not God's kingdom be at peace? Shall we be at peace with the flesh, the world, and the devil, and be at variance with God, and at strife one with another? 'Fire is cruel, wrath is raging; but who can stand before envy?' Prov. xxvii. And if there be none can stand before envy, how then can envy stand before God?

If thou canst not forgive him that doth offend thee, thou prayest

against thyself, and askest vengeance upon thee; therefore the apostle exhorteth thee not to let the sun go down upon thy wrath, Eph. iv. 26. Charity envieth not, saith St Paul; therefore see thou have charity, lest thou be counted an envious person. The beasts of the field are armed with horns, with hoofs, with tusks and such like, to take revenge; but nature hath left nothing for man to put him in mind of revenge, and yet man above all other creatures is most desirous of revengement, for he hateth his own life; therefore it is against nature to envy. John saith, he that hateth his brother is a manslayer, and loveth not God, neither knoweth God. If an envious man, saith he, say he loveth God, he is a liar, because he hateth his image; if he say he knoweth God, he is a liar. How canst thou love God, and hate good men? And how canst thou love learning, when thou hatest the learned? So doth the envious man all, both good and bad. Therefore this is the worst sin, because it cometh nearest the sin against the Holy Ghost.

Consider, therefore, whom thou hatest, even thine image. The devil was appointed to hate man, and not man to hate man; and if thou hatest a good man, thou hatest God; if thou hatest an evil man, thou hatest one like thyself; and if thou hatest one like thyself, thou hatest thine own soul; therefore, as St Paul saith, 'Have peace with all men.' Canst thou not hate the sin, and love the person, as the physician hateth the disease, and yet loveth the diseased?

As a great many of bees can lodge together in a hive, so a legion of devils can nestle together in one man; but many, although they cannot live asunder, yet they cannot live together.

Wherefore now consider the pedigree of peace. God is the God of peace, the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of peace, the angels are the messengers of peace, the ministers are the preachers of peace, and the magistrate is the defender of peace. Shall we, then, that have the God of peace, the Spirit of peace, the messengers of peace, the preachers of peace, the magistrates of peace, and, as I may say, the queen of peace, be at envy and war one with another? Marvel not though I am so long upon this sin; for there is none of you that hear me this day, but you can give me sufficient matter to speak hereof. Then can I want words when ye bring matter? Shall I not wrestle, and seek to overthrow this giant, which challengeth every man?

As no man finding a serpent, leaveth him before he be dead, so let us slaughter this monster while he is under the axe, that he never rise any more. Consider of the wrong thou doest to thyself, when thou enviest another; for the stroke of envy redounds unto thee. It were better thou didst gratulate them with good things,

as good men have done, and do daily; but instead of imitating their virtues, or commending their gifts, we envy them, and malign them, and so their joy is our sorrow. But the envious man doth pay for his spite, for it recoils upon himself; and envy is punished with envy, and hatred also with hatred; for he which hateth all, shall be hated of all. Thus he is tormented for another, as Herod tormented himself for Christ; and the Jews troubled themselves for Paul; for envy is as gall to the heart, as pricks to the stomach, and as a canker in the mouth, and ever vexeth thee, as the evil spirit of Saul vexed him.

Love is so contrary to envy, as that it hath more joy of others' welfare, than envy hath of his own. Therefore an envious man may be compared to Cain, who, when he had killed his brother Abel, was so troubled, that he said, 'Whosoever findeth me, shall kill me.' The covetous man, although he will not communicate his own goods, yet he would have others to communicate their goods. The proud man, although he be proud himself, yet he would have others to be humble; but the envious man careth not who doth any good.

As the eagle doth count them bastards that cannot abide to look upon the sun; so Christ doth account them bastards which will not take him to be an example of lowliness.

Every creature doth impart his good unto man, but the envious man; he hath separated himself from doing good to any, even as an apostate.

Every vice is the contrary of some virtue; as intemperance to moderation, incontinency to chastity, pride to humility; but envy is contrary to all. This is the cognisance of the devil; for God saith, 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if you love one another.' So the devil he saith, By this shall men know that you are my disciples, if you envy and hate one another. The proud, the prodigal, the covetous, the lascivious, they are loved of some, but the envious man is hated of all. And this sin is so loathsome unto him, that he cannot abide it in any but in himself.

Therefore, if we love ourselves, let us love our neighbours; for nothing doth more please God than love; so that if the blackamoor could be clean, here is water enough to wash him. But the flesh of man is more strong than all these reasons.

God hath put enmity between us and the serpent, and the serpent he hath put enmity between man and man.

When Joseph had laden his brethren full of corn, and sent them away, he bade them not to fall out by the way; so I would this lesson, when we have plenty of all things, and are full, had deep impression in our hearts, that we forget it not: 'Fall not out by the way.'

# NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

IN THREE SERMONS.

## TO THE READER.[1]

WHEREAS these sermons of Nebuchadnezzar have heretofore been printed by an unperfect copy, and by means thereof have passed through the hands of divers, having in some places the mind of the author obscured, in other some the sentences unskilfully patched together; whereby the author's discredit might be furthered, and the sale of the sermons have been hindered: now as I have caused them to be examined by the best copies, and to be corrected accordingly, so I thought good to certify thee of the same, that the wants which were in the first impression might not cause thee to suspect this impression also, and so discourage thee from acquainting thyself with the excellent instructions offered in these treatises.

[1] This note is in all the copies that I have seen. I do not know who is its author. —ED.

# THE PRIDE OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

*At the end of the twelve months he walked in the royal palace of Babel. And the king spake, and said, Is not this great Babel, that I have built for the house of my kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?*—DAN. IV. 29, 30.

I HAVE chosen this story of Nebuchadnezzar, wherein is laid down his pride, his fall, and his restitution. This Nebuchadnezzar was a wicked king, and therefore God warned him by a dream, and by Daniel, to amend his life; but all would not serve. He made many shews, but he revolted again; therefore at the last God give him over for a time, and he became like a beast, until he acknowledged his power to come from God. A warning to all rulers, to put them in remembrance, that one Ruler is above, which must be served of them all, or else all their buildings, and treasures, and guard will not shield them from judgment when the stroke cometh, no more than they could save Nebuchadnezzar. 'At the end of twelve months,' saith Daniel, 'this king walked in his royal palace.' The prophet shewed that he had deserved his punishment before, and that his dream which he had did tell him that his kingdom should depart from him for his pride; yet this respite of twelve months was granted him, like the forty days which were granted to the Ninevites, to try what he would do upon his warning, and whether he would repent as the Ninevites did. Therefore the Holy Ghost sheweth how the time ran, and how he lived after, as if he would say, If he will return yet, and be warned by the dreams, or by the prophets which I sent him, I will stay my hand, and his kingdom shall not depart from him. But here he sheweth

that he forgot his dream like a dream, and was more desirous to know what it meant, than to be warned by it. The twelve months ran, month after month, yet Nebuchadnezzar is all one. Now his dreams are gone, he thinketh that all is ended; therefore he gets him up into his palace amidst his delights, to beak himself as it were in the sun of all his pleasures, where indeed he hastened God to take away all his pleasures and delights from him. When he should have repented, as the prophet Daniel willed him, and ripped up his sins, and bewailed his wicked life, and poured forth tears, and prevented his judgment with his prayer upon his knees, then was he stalking in his galleries, and thinking what sin should be next, to fill up the number of his rebellions, that God might not spare him when he judged. So the wicked will not suffer the prophecies of God against them to be vain, but they will put God in mind of their punishments and sin till the punishment do come upon them, to fulfil the threatenings due unto them.

Some think that Nebuchadnezzar walked upon the roof of his palace, from whence he might see all parts of the city round about him, like the mountain whither the tempter led our Saviour Christ, to shew him the beauty of the world.

This the prophet Daniel would signify, that the king lived in ease as he lived before, and pleased himself in vanity still, for all his warnings, and turned his time of repentance to sin again. Therefore God would defer the time no longer, but cut him down, like the barren and fruitless fig-tree, to teach us to take mercy when it is offered, and repent while we have time and space, and if God speak unto us but once, to lay it up in our hearts for ever, not looking or expecting to be spoken to again, because God is not bound to admonish, or give us any warning at all.

One would have thought that Nebuchadnezzar would have remembered his warning while he had lived, which had such a strange and fearful dream, and after that another dream, being no less strange and fearful than the former dream, to confirm it; and after such a prophet to expound it, and the exposition of it threatening such a miserable ruin and downfall to himself.

One would have thought and believed that he could never have forgotten it, nor put it out of his remembrance, although he had lived unto this day. But like a wonder which lasteth not above nine days, so is the repentance of them which sin by custom; for when sin is rooted it sticketh fast, and will hardly be weeded out, though God should send us dreams and visions, or should raise up prophets; Daniel himself cannot make this blackamoor white, which

always hath been black before. And this we may see in ourselves, for why have we need to hear so often of repentance, more than of anything else, but that it is such a thing as we cannot frame ourselves unto? If we be warned of anything but of sin, one warning will serve. But we are so incorporate and inured to sin, that a thousand sermons will not serve; so custom hath made sin stronger in many, than the word of God. Well, remember or apply it how you will, after twelve months, God will come and take account of his dreams, and of his prophets which he sent him, to see what he hath profited by them. Although he hath leaden feet which are long in coming, yet he hath iron hands, which, when he cometh, will strike home.

Now the twelve months are expired, God comes and finds Nebuchadnezzar upon his towers. When he should have cast himself down to the ground, and thought upon his dream and Daniel, and so have humbled his pride, he was perched upon his roost, and there he begins to crow of his wealth: 'Is not this great Babel, which I have built for the house of my kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?' See how the man standeth in admiration of his vanity, like an usurer which doateth on his money, as though he had deserved immortal fame for spending his money vainly. 'Is not this great Babel?' &c.; he should rather have said, Is not this Nebuchadnezzar's folly, which he hath built for a mock to his name, and an impeachment to his wisdom, for men to say when they pass by, Look how our king hath bestowed his revenues; here lie our subsidies and tributes in this stone wall? But Nebuchadnezzar thinks that every one will praise him for his folly; therefore, like a woman when she is pranked up in her bravery, thinks that all do admire her, and hath as goodly an opinion of herself as the peacock hath of his feathers, and frameth all her looks, and her gestures, and her speeches accordingly; so when Nebuchadnezzar sat in his palace, and saw such shows about him, Now, saith pride, thou must frame thy looks, and gestures, and speeches accordingly, or else the king's palace will be braver than the king himself; so he beginneth to exalt his mind higher than his palace, and to look and speak stouter than he did before. The temptation was no sooner in his heart, but the words were in his mouth, and he pleased himself therein so well, that he could not refrain, being alone; but as a fool admires himself in a glass, so when he was alone, and nobody with him, he strutted along, and bragged by himself, to think what a jolly fellow he was, and how men began to talk of his buildings. By this we may see how wealth and hon-

our change manners, and how a gay coat, or a great band, or a gold ring, can brave a man's mind, and make him look and speak after another manner than he is accustomed when they are away from him.

It is a wonderful thing, to see what power these pretty vain toys have over the mind, and alter and change a man suddenly, to make him think better of himself that day he wears them, than any other day besides.

'Is not this great Babel, which I have built for the house of my kingdom, by the might of my power, for the honour of my majesty?' Before the Holy Ghost layeth down Nebuchadnezzar's words, mark how he cometh unto them, 'The king spake and said.' *Spake and said;* was not one enough, but he must say, spake *and* said? This doubling of the words sheweth that he spoke with a premeditate pride, from his heart-root, which passed not whether it were a sin or no, come what will come of it. The Holy Ghost doth bring other speeches which he said, and no more; but here he saith, *spake and said,* as though he spake twice, nor as he spoke at other times, but like a man at defiance, which would not recall any word, but if he could say more, he would say more to anger.

Did I call it great Babel? I may call it great Babel. Did I say that I built it? I will say that I built it. Did I add, for the honour of my majesty? Let it go for the honour of my majesty. Thus he spake, and said, as though he would be constant in his pride, although he were constant in no other thing.

'Is not this great Babel, which I have built for the house of my kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?'

Three things I note in this saying. First, what a glorious opinion Nebuchadnezzar had of his vain building, out of these words, 'Is not this great Babel?' The second out of these words, 'which I have built by the might of my power;' wherein he termeth himself the founder of it, as if he had done all without a helper. The third is, that in all his work he sought nothing but vain glory, out of these words, 'for the honour of my majesty.' These three sins Nebuchadnezzar doth bewray in one brag, and in all these three we are so like, that the beasts were not so like him, when he became like a beast.

First, We have not so wonderful an opinion of God, or of his word, or of his heaven, as we have of our own acts, although we be never able to do half that Nebuchadnezzar did. Secondly, This is our manner, to attribute all to ourselves, whatsoever it be, riches,

honour, health, or knowledge; as though all came by labour, or policy, or art, or literature. If we cannot draw it to one of these, then we think it fortune, although we understand not what fortune is. If we did count ourselves beholding unto God for them, then we would find some time to be thankful unto him.

Lastly, When we over-view these matters, this is our solace and comfort, to think these are the things which make me famous and spoken of, and pointed at; and then we end as though it were enough to be pointed at, 'Is not this great Babel?' That which one loves seems greater and more precious above all which he loveth not, although they be better than it; so did these buildings seem to Nebuchadnezzar.

One would not think that a house were a matter to make a king proud, although it were never so fair; stone walls are not so precious that he should repose all his honour upon lime and mortar. But this is a just thing with God: vain hope, vain prosperity, vain comfort, and vain glory, that may deceive them when they trust unto it. Therefore, as the faithful soul looketh up to God, or upon the word, or up to heaven, and saith to itself, Is not this my hope? is not this my joy? is not this my inheritance? so the carnal man, when he looketh upon his buildings, or his ground, or his money, saith to himself, Is not this my joy? is not this my life? is not this my comfort? So, while he pores and gapes upon it, by little and little the love of it grows more and more in his heart, until at last he hath mind on nothing else.

This was the first dotage of Nebuchadnezzar; the second was, 'which I have built by the might of my power.' What a vaunt was this, to say that he built Babylon! when all histories accord that it was built by Semiramis before Nebuchadnezzar was born. Therefore, why doth he boast of that which another did?

The answer is easy. Why do other men so now? We see that every one doth labour to obscure the fame of others, that they may shine alone, and bear the name themselves, especially in great buildings; for if they do but add or alter anything in schools, or hospitals, or colleges, they look straight to be counted the founders of them, and so the founders of many places are forgotten. So it is like that Nebuchadnezzar did add or alter something in this city, and therefore he took all to himself, as the fashion hath been ever since. But if none had built it, but he had been the founder of it, as some would seem, yet this had been a proud and arrogant speech, to say, 'which I have built by the might of my power;' for it was not he which could build Babel, no more than Nimrod

could finish Babel, but 'unless the Lord build the house, the builders build in vain.' Therefore, when he said, 'by the might of my power,' he should have said, 'by the might of God's power.' But by this you may plainly discern how hard and difficult a thing it is to hit upon a right word, or a good work, which hath not a good thought to bring it forth. Therefore make the root sweet, or the fruit will be sour, counterfeit as cunningly as you can.

Lastly, when he putteth in 'for the honour of my majesty,' he sheweth that he was of Absalom's humour, who, although he had deserved shame, yet he would have fame. Because he had no children to keep his name in remembrance; therefore he erected a pillar, which he called 'Absalom's place.' So, many stately houses and places in England bear the names of those lords or others that do possess or own them, for the like vanity.

Here Absalom thought to be buried, as Nebuchadnezzar thought to dwell in his palace; but he was cast into a pit, as Nebuchadnezzar was turned into the wilderness. So Shebna made his sepulchre in one country, and was buried in another. For why should pride have the reward of humility? Humility, saith Solomon, goeth before honour; that is to say, honour is the reward of humility. And yet Nebuchadnezzar would be honoured for his pride. What had he, or Shebna, or Absalom done, that they should erect such monuments to be praised after death, which were not worthy to be praised in their life? Before the building, Nebuchadnezzar had done nothing worth speaking of; for because he lived always like a beast, therefore God punished him like a beast, and did he deserve now to be spoken of in all ages for heaping of stones together? We may see that great men are proud of a small matter, and they look to be praised for everything that they do. But look how God overthwarteth them: for oftentimes in that they look to make their greatest glory, they shame themselves most of all; and that which they practise to exalt them, doth disgrace them; and that which they do to win them love, getteth them hatred. Sin so deceiveth them, like the blind Aramites, that they take a clean contrary way to their desires, as we may see in Gen. xi. They which built Babel said they would build it to get them a name, but they got shame; for they could not finish it when they had begun it, but were confounded in such sort that they knew not what they did, so suddenly they understood not what one another said. So when Nebuchadnezzar came to himself again, he shewed that when he sought his own honour, honour departed from him, and he was made like a

beast; but when he sought God's honour, honour came to him again, and he was made a king.

This would pull away many toys from women's backs, if they did consider how God maketh them ridiculous, by that they wear to make themselves amiable; if they did think that the apparel which they clog on to please the world, by the secret judgment of God, did not please but displease, they would be ashamed of their attire, as Eve was of her nakedness. Would they wear such garbs and paint their faces but to please? See now how God doth mock them, for they are not liked but disliked, and worser thought of for it, than they that go in russet coats and seek no praise at all. They think, Am I not brave? Others think, Is she not proud? They think, Am I not sweet? Others think, Is she not light? Yet they dream that every man praiseth them for their bravery, as Nebuchadnezzar thought that every one would honour him for his palace. If their bravery condemn them before men, how will it condemn them before God? Therefore, when Nebuchadnezzar saith, 'for the honour of my majesty,' he should have said, 'for the honour of God's majesty;' and then this had been recorded for his honour indeed, and his house had been the house of God, for as we should speak, and study, and labour to God's glory, so we should build also to God's glory, that our houses may be like temples, as Obadiah's was. But few seek glory that way, they had rather pull down than build in such sort.

Thus you have heard what Nebuchadnezzar spake in secret, as though God would display the thoughts and pride of such builders. These are the meditations of princes and noblemen; when they behold their buildings, or open their coffers, or look upon their train swimming after them, they think as Nebuchadnezzar thought, 'Is not this great Babel?' Is not this great glory? Is not this the train that maketh me reverenced in the streets? Are not these the things which shall make my children rich? Is not this the house that shall keep my name, and cause me to be remembered, and make them which are children now to speak of me hereafter? When they shall pass by and look up, and see these antics and knacks over their heads, they will say, Oh, he which built this was a great man, he bare a sway both in court and country; who but he while he lived? Although this king be dead and buried, yet his pride is escaped and come to us. Nebuchadnezzar hath children yet alive, which build as high as he, look as high as he, go as brave as he, spend as vainly as he, and are as proud as he, although they be not kings, nor dukes, nor earls, nor knights, nor yet good esquires.

Look upon their palaces, and think whether they be of Nebuchadnezzar's brood; 'Is not this great Babel?' and is not Nebuchadnezzar lord of it? Oh, if they might live to walk in these galleries still, they would desire no other heaven; but Nebuchadnezzar hath shewed the way before them, and they must all dance after him; though they were as mighty, though they were mightier than he, death will not take his kingdom for a ransom. Now what is Babel? and what is Nebuchadnezzar, the king thereof? Now Babel is destroyed, and the king that built it laid in the dust; had it not been better to have built an house in heaven, which might have received him when he died?

The name of these palaces may well be called *Babel*, that is, confusion, because they prophesy confusion to them that build them, because their foundation is pride, their walls extortion, their roof ambition, and all within them usury, bribery, and cruelty. If this be the best that Nebuchadnezzar hath to vaunt of, what is the worst which he may be ashamed of?

When I see how earnest this king was about his dream, and how loose he sat after in his palace, methinks I see the image of the world in one man. How lively doth Nebuchadnezzar resemble the dreamers of our time? He could not rest till he knew the interpretation of his dream; such inquiry, such diligence to know God's will, that a man would have thought, Now if the king meet with a prophet that can tell him the truth, and instruct him from God, that his dream warned him to amend his life, he will then reclaim himself and reform his realm, and become such a king as was never in the land before.

But, behold, no sooner resolved of this doubt, but he is ready to be warned again, and was not so attentive to the prophet as he was to his dream, although he cared for neither; for when he understood that his dream went about to change the course of his life, he went away like Naaman in a chafe, and cared no more for his dream after. Before the dream came, all would have said, that such a dream would have humbled his heart for ever. Before the prophet came, all would have said, that such a prophet would have converted him with a word; but Nebuchadnezzar is Nebuchadnezzar, and if another dream come more fearful than this, yet Nebuchadnezzar would be Nebuchadnezzar, and love his palace better than paradise.

So we think, if God would send a famine upon this land, that would make us fear him; but God hath sent a famine, and yet we do not fear him. If God would send an earthquake upon this land, that would make us fear him; but God hath sent an earth-

quake, and yet we do not fear him. If God would send a pestilence upon this land, that would make us fear him; but God hath sent a pestilence, and yet we do not fear him. If God would send war upon this land, that would make us fear him; but God hath sent war, and yet we do not fear him; therefore, what will make us fear him?

There be many which dream upon religion, as Nebuchadnezzar dreamed upon his dream; and as he desired only to know what it meant, so they desire only to know. 'Master,' saith the young man to Christ, 'what shall I do to come into heaven?' He would fain know the way to heaven, but when Christ shewed him the way, he would not take it; so they will go from preacher to preacher, as Nebuchadnezzar sent from one wise man to another, to be resolved in points of religion. Such a scrutiny, such attention, such heed, as though they would run out of the world, and go beyond all, that a man would think they would do anything; as the Jews came unto Moses, and this young man unto Christ. But when they have heard what they came for, they do, like Nebuchadnezzar, as they did before; now they say it was but a dream, because the meaning doth not answer according unto their will. So Ahab inquired of the prophet, to hear what he would say, but it appears that he never meant to follow him, except he would answer as he would have him.

When it cometh to the act, which is every man's trial, then you shall see who are like Nebuchadnezzar, that is, which affect only to know; and who is like Zaccheus, that is, which practise as they know; for as the truth is revealed, so it must be witnessed, or else the fall of Nebuchadnezzar sheweth what judgment will follow upon such neglecting.

Because he would not do as his dream warned him, and as the prophet counselled him, therefore God forsook him, and his kingdom departed from him, and he was thrust out of his palace, and turned like an ox into the wilderness, where he lived like a beast until seven years were ended: a warning to all, to take warning by the word, for it is the gentle warner; the next will be harder, the third and fourth harder than it, like to the nine plagues of Egypt, which did exceed one another; for what is he that can weigh the wrath of God, or the grievousness of sin?

Some men would think that Nebuchadnezzar might have spoken all this without any such great offence as was taken at it (for he said no more, but that it was a fair house, and that he builded it,

and that he erected it for his honour), seeing many under princes delight in worse vanities than fair buildings, and speak vainer often in a week. Therefore when you see how it displeaseth God, to vaunt of these earthly things, or to impute anything to ourselves, think what shall be the doom of great sins. If Nebuchadnezzar became like a beast, and lodged in the wilderness for his pride, they which bear pride, and covetousness, and lust, and wrath, and malice in one breast, shall lodge in hell, and become like devils, because they are like beasts already. Therefore let this be instead of Daniel's warning; if God did take such strait account of Nebuchadnezzar for his dream, what he had profited by it, what account will he take of us, what profit we have made by Nebuchadnezzar's fall and punishment.

Thus you have heard what the voice spake from earth; now you shall hear what the voice spake from heaven; for it followeth, 'While the word was in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, and said, O king, to thee be it spoken; thy kingdom shall be taken from thee,' &c. God will warn him no more by dreams nor by prophets, as he did; but his judgments shall speak. Here is fulfilled that which Elihu saith to Job, 'God speaketh once, and twice by dreams, and visions in the night, and man seeth it not; at the last God openeth his eyes, by the corrections which he had sealed,' Job xxxiii. 14. So God spake unto Nebuchadnezzar, first by dreams, and after by his prophets, and Nebuchadnezzar regarded it not; at last God openeth his eyes by corrections, which he had sealed up, that they should not touch him, if any other messenger could bring him. As the Holy Ghost doth note the time when Nebuchadnezzar spake in his palace; so he noteth the time when God spake from heaven, 'Even while the words were in the king's mouth;' as though he should say, God answered before he looked for it, when he thought God had been as far from him, as he was all the year before. Thus God lay (as it were in the scout), to watch when he spake treason, and to apprehend him upon it; O Nebuchadnezzar, thou hast vaunted these twelve months since I warned thee; I made as though I heard not, but suffered thee to do and speak thy pleasure; and vauntest thou still? Surely thou shalt escape me no longer, I will not hear one word more against my honour. So he cutteth him off while the words were in his mouth, and pronounceth the word of judgment against him.

The first note in this verse, is the time when God spake from heaven. 'Pride,' saith Solomon, 'goeth before the fall;' so when pride had spoken, then judgment spake, even while the proud

word was in his mouth. See how God shews that these brags offended him, and therefore he judges while he speaks. How short is the triumph of the wicked! When they begin to crow, God stoppeth their breath, and judgment seizeth upon them when they think no danger near them. So when Belshazzar was in his mirth with his nobles, the fearful hand wrote his doom upon the wall, and presently his mirth was changed into sadness, that he became as one that was stricken with a palsy; so while Herod vaunted himself, and the people honoured him like a god, the angel of God smote him upon his throne, and immediately he was devoured of worms in the face of them which honoured him; so while the Philistines were triumphing and banqueting, Samson pulled the temple upon their heads; so when the men of Ziklag were feasting and dancing, David came upon them and slew them; when the Israelites were at their manna and quails, even while the meat, saith David, was yet in their mouths, God took away their lives; when Job's children were making merry one with another, the wind came and blew down the house; while the old world was marrying and giving in marriage, the flood came and drowned them; while the steward was recounting with himself, and thinking that his master knew not what policy was in his heart, suddenly his lord called him to an account; while the churl was musing of his barns full of corn, and saying to himself, 'Be merry, my soul,' that night his soul was taken from him; so while we sin and think nothing of it, our sins mount up to heaven, and stand at the bar, and call for vengeance against us. How soon Abel's blood cried for vengeance of Cain! We cannot sin so quickly, but God seeth us as quickly. How many have been stricken while the oath have been in their mouths! as Jeroboam was stricken while he struck, that they might see why they were stricken, and yet all this will not keep us from swearing. Though a man sin often, and steal his sins, as it were, without punishment, yet at last he is taken napping, even while the wickedness is in his hand, and his day is set when he shall pay for all, whether it be after twelve months, or twelve years; when it cometh it will seem too soon. Therefore once again let this be instead of Daniel's warning. If God did take so strait account of Nebuchadnezzar, how he had profited by his dream, what an account will he take of us, how we have profited by Nebuchadnezzar's punishment! Here I end.

# THE FALL OF KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

*While the word was in his mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee be it spoken; Thy kingdom is departed from thee: and they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass with the oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou knowest that the most high God beareth rule over the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The very same hour was this thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar; and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as the oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown as eagles' feathers, and his nails as birds' claws.*—DANIEL IV. 31–33.

FROM the 26th verse to the end of this chapter, is laid down the pride, fall, and restitution of Nebuchadnezzar. The two first verses are like a banner of his pride, which sheweth him in his ruffling as it were in the air, before he knew God or himself. The three next verses are the discovery of his shame, which shew him in his misery, as it were grovelling on the ground, after God hath cooled his courage. The four last verses are the celebration of his recovery, which shew him in holiness as it were rapt into heaven, and singing with the saints for joy, that God had brought him unto his knowledge, though it were through shame and trouble, and loss of all that he had, seven years together. Of his pride we have heard already; yet because we are friends to vices, as we are to men, so long as they prosper and flourish, but when they decay and fall, then we shrink away, and are ashamed of them; so it may be, if ye could see pride take a fall, though ye love her well, yet ye would

forsake her like a bankrupt, when ye see that she can pleasure you no longer.

Therefore you shall see Nebuchadnezzar upon his feet again; before you beheld him upon his knees,[1] that when you see what a king he was in his galleries, and after find his servants in his palace, and his subjects in his throne, and himself like a beast in the wilderness, God may give you hearts to think a little of this sin, what it is which cost so dear, and is so common now in every house, as it was then in the king's court.

'After twelve months,' saith Daniel, that is, twelve months after God had warned this king by dreams, and by Daniel, to repent his sins, he was strutting in his galleries, and thought what sin should be next, as though he had never heard of dream or prophet. By this computation of sin, wherein the months are observed so exactly, how long Nebuchadnezzar rebelled after he was warned, Daniel shews what reckoning God keeps of our months, and weeks, and days, which he gives us to repent, as he did Nebuchadnezzar, and what an account we shall make of them, as Nebuchadnezzar did. Though we count no more of our age, than the child doth of his youth, and have done no more of our task at twenty, than when we were but ten; nor at thirty, than when we were but twenty; nor at forty, than when we were but thirty; yet we shall give account of more hours in the day of judgment, and it shall be heavier to the old, than young; to you which have the word, than they which want it; and there is a great odds between Nebuchadnezzar and us; for he which challenged Nebuchadnezzar for twelve months since he was warned, may challenge us of twelve years since we were warned; and yet we look not for so great punishment as fell upon Nebuchadnezzar for twelve months. Daniel names there twelve months, as though he would speak of a great matter, and shews how worthy Nebuchadnezzar was to be punished, because he might have reformed his life since he was warned; for there were twelve months between his dreams and his punishment. But that year wherein he had so many warnings and teachings was as vain as the rest, and vainer than the years before; for now he should have been a mourner, like the king of Nineveh when Jonas threatened destruction unto them; but like a victor of a country returned from battle to solemnize his triumph, first he decked his palace as brave as himself, and then he walks his stations in it, and when he hath set all things before him which might make him forget

[1] Qu. 'Therefore, you shall see Nebuchadnezzar upon his knees, before you behold him upon his feet again'?—Ed.

God, and like a serpent that would burst unless he discharged some of his poison, he breaketh out, and said, 'Is not this great Babel, which I have built by the might of my power, for the honour of my majesty?' Wherein observe, first, what a glorious opinion this vain king had of his vain buildings; secondly, how that he names himself the founder of them, as though he had done all without an help; thirdly, that in all his works he sought nothing but vainglory, as he witnesseth against himself, saying, 'which I have built for the honour of my majesty;' not for the honour of God's majesty, but for the honour of *my* majesty. So first, that which he should have contemned, as Christ did the beauty of the temple, he admired it; and nothing seemed so glorious to him, as that which made him shameful to God. Secondly, that city which was built by Semiramis, he arrogateth to himself, and never joined the chief Workmaster with him, but saith, 'which I have built by the might of my power,' when he should have said, by the might of God's power; for 'unless God build the house, the builder,' saith David, 'buildeth but in vain.' Lastly, that which he should have built for the honour of God, as the man built a chamber for the prophet, he builded for his honour, as our Nebuchadnezzars do. Therefore, when all his pleasures were prepared like a feast, and he came to sit down at the banquet, it happened to him as to the churl in the Gospel: after he had filled his barns, when he came to sing in his heart, 'Be merry my soul,' that night his soul was taken from him, and the devils made merry with it in hell; so he had feathered his nest, and began to crow upon his roost, 'Is not this great Babel,' &c.? as if he should say, Now Nebuchadnezzar, make thee merry. That hour his honour was taken from him; for a voice came down from heaven, like the terrible hand which wrote upon the wall when Belshazzar sat at his banquet, and dashed his pride upon such a rock, that within an hour all his pomp, and pleasures, and treasures, suffered such a shipwreck, that his fall was more admired of all, than his glory and buildings were admired of himself. Thus all the joy, and pleasure, and glory of pride, are spoken with a breath, and stopped with another.

You have heard what the voice spake from earth; now ye shall hear what the voice sounds from heaven. These three verses following declare this king's fall, when, and how, and from whom it was: 'While the words were yet,' &c.; there is the time. 'A voice,' &c.; there is the judge, &c. 'O king,' &c.; there is the arraignment. 'Thy kingdom,' &c.; there is the judgment. 'He was driven from men, and lived with beasts in the wilderness, till his

hairs were grown like eagles' feathers;' there is the execution and manner of his punishment. First of the time, 'While, &c.

As Daniel observed the time when Nebuchadnezzar sinned, so he observed the time when Nebuchadnezzar is punished; as if God had lain in wait to catch him in his words, and take him at the trip, even as he watched Lot's wife when she looked back, and transformed her into a pillar of salt, so soon as she looked behind her. So now the Lord lay as it were in the scout, to watch when Nebuchadnezzar spake treason, and to apprehend him upon it. O, Nebuchadnezzar, thou hast vaunted these twelve months since I warned thee, and I made as though I heard not, but suffered thee to do and speak thy pleasure; and vauntest thou still? Surely thou shalt escape me no longer, I will not hear a word more against mine honour. So he cut him off while the words were in his mouth, and propoundeth the words of judgment against him. If you mark the time when the voice spake from heaven, you may see three wisdoms of God: First, God takes him in his fault, that he might see his fault, as Jeroboam was stricken when he struck the prophet, 1 Kings xiii., that he might know why he was stricken. Then he takes him suddenly, because he contemneth his warning, as the fire came upon Sodom while they contemned Lot's warning, Gen. xix. 24. Thirdly, God takes him where he is pleasantest and lustiest, and safest, in his palace, which was like a castle, as he took Herod when his guard stood by him, Acts xii. 23, that he might see that nothing can guard him from God, but God must guard him from danger, or else princes be not safer than subjects; so, though a man sin often, and steal his sins as it were without punishment, yet at the last he is took napping while the wickedness is in his hand, as the Jews were while the quails were in their mouths, Num. xi. 33, and his day is set when he shall pay for all, whether it be after twelve months or twelve years, whensoever it cometh, it will seem too soon. Vengeance doth stay till sin be ripe, and watch the time when they are most occupied, then judgment steps forth, like the angel to stop Balaam in his way, Num. xxii. 22, and xxiii. 10, because the punishment is more grievous and terrible when they look not for it (for the worst that is wish, like Balaam, to 'die the death of the righteous'), therefore God will cross them in that; though they prosper always before, yet their ends shall be a kind of judgment upon all their life, and a prophecy of torment, for all men to see what become of the wicked after death, that they may fear to be like unto them. As when we see some fall down under the table while they sit swilling at the wine, some stricken dumb

in the pulpit while they preach untruths, even as the Philistines were slain while they feasted, and as Herod was ashamed while he vaunted, Acts xii. 23, and as Jeroboam was stricken while he struck, 1 Kings xiii. 4. What doth this teach us, but that our sins depart from us so soon as they are done, unto the Judge, and there they accuse us, as Cain's murder cried out against him, so soon as he slew his brother. 'I know thy works,' saith God, Rev. iii. 15; he may say, I know thy works and thy thoughts too; for Judas could not go so closely about his treachery, Mat. xxvi. 14–16, but that Christ did know when the thought entered into his heart, and heard when he conferred also with the scribes, and saw likewise when he took the bribe, though he kept a time to punish him, as he saith, Ps. xxxvii. 2, 'When I see a convenient time, then will I execute judgment.'

Now the time was come when this king should be made an example unto all other kings after him, to amend their lives, and reform their realms, whenas the prophet cometh from God unto them to tell them what they should do. When dream and Daniel had done what they could, now God calls forth his judgments, and bids them see what they can do, and commands them to chase Nebuchadnezzar, until he have lost his kingdom, until he be driven out of his palace, until he be fled into the wilderness, until he be degenerate like a beast, until his subjects, and servants, and pages make their sport, and gaze and wonder at him, like a fool which goeth unto the stocks, or a trespasser, which is gazed at upon the pillory; so the king was debased, when God heard him but vaunt of his buildings. Therefore let us take heed and be careful after what sort we speak, and what words slip from us, lest God take us in our lies, or oaths, or slanders, or ribaldry, as he took Nebuchadnezzar when his tongue walked without a bit, for if he had supposed that God had been so near, and that he would have answered him as he did, he would have held his peace, and laid his hand upon his mouth, rather than pay so dear for a vain word, which did him no good when it was spoken.

The second note is of the judge, 'A voice came down from heaven,' the controlling voice came down from heaven. God is most offended with our sin, for Nebuchadnezzar might have spoken more than this, before any other man; and no man could control him, because he was king, and kings delight in greater vanities than buildings, yet no man saith, Why doest thou so? Because Solomon saith, 'He which repeateth a matter separateth the prince:' that is, he which tells princes their faults maketh them his enemies, there-

fore since John Baptist died, only God is left to reprove almost all that sin by authority, yet there is one in heaven hath an ear and a tongue, and checketh the king as boldly as ever the king checketh his subjects. When the voice from earth spake vainly, the voice from heaven spake judgment. Here is the King of heaven against the king of earth; the voice of God against the voice of man; a divine wrath warring with a human pride; the fire is kindled, woe to the stubble. The Lord of hosts is in arms against the lord of Babel, and begins to lay hands on him, and to thrust him out of his throne. First, he rattles him like a thunder, 'O king Nebuchadnezzar,' as if he should say, For all thou art a king, thou shalt see whether another be above thee; now guard thy person, now defend thy honour, for he whom thou hast despised, threateneth to take thy kingdom from thee; go now and walk in thy galleries, fetch one turn more before thou be turned out of door, and walk with the beasts in the forest.

Now he comes to the arraignment, and calls him to the bar: 'O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee be it spoken.' He was never called *king* with more reverence, nor had such pay for sin in all his reign. God gives him his title, and he tells him his lot; he calls him king, but without a kingdom, as if he had said, Late king of Babel, hold up thy hand! Here a king is arraigned in his own kingdom, and no evidence given against him; but as though he had witnessed against himself, as all sinners do, God condemneth him out of his own mouth, and to open his ears, he calleth him by his own name, 'O king Nebuchadnezzar,' as the prisoner is called when he holds up his hand at the bar. Then he pronounceth the judgment, 'To thee be it spoken;' to thee, which advancest thyself like God; to thee, which wouldst not take heed by thy dream; to thee, which wouldst not be warned by the prophet; to thee, which didst all for thine own honour. Now hearken to thy judgment: 'Thy kingdom is departed from thee;' 'thou shalt be driven out of thy palace;' they which should honour thee shall expulse thee; thou shalt reign with the beasts in the desert, there shall be thy dwelling seven years; go now and stalk in the woods, as thou didst in thy palace;' and when thou art among the lions, and wolves, and bears, look upon Babel which thou hast built.

How doth this speech differ from Nebuchadnezzar's speech. His words were but words, but God's words were, 'He spake and it was done.' For 'in the same hour that which was spoken was done,' saith Daniel, and whatsoever the voice threateneth unto our sins, or unto the sinner, shall be done at first or at last. To Nebuchad-

nezzar it was said, 'Thy kingdom shall be taken from thee;' to us it is said, Thy life shall be taken from thee. To him it was said, 'Thou shalt be thrust forth into the desert;' to us it is said, Thou shalt be thrown forth into darkness. To him it was said, 'Thou shalt be like beasts;' to us it is said, Thou shalt be like the damned. Shall not the voice spoken to us be remembered with God, as well as the threatenings menaced to him?

This voice came from heaven, and therefore it spake home; not like them which glide by the faults of princes, and whisper behind their backs, as though they would reprove them if they durst, but for fear lest the prince, or councillor, or judge, or magistrate should take it as he means it, and think that he aims at them; which makes them speak in parables, as though they would cast a veil over their reproof, and eat their message before they have spoken it. The Holy Ghost teacheth us here to reprove, so that whosoever sinneth may know that thou speakest to him. He which speaketh from heaven (as the voice did) must speak like John Baptist among the publicans, and harlots, and soldiers, as though he went from one to another, and said, This is spoken to thee, this is spoken to thee, this is spoken to thee. For unless we come near these mortal gods, and proud Nebuchadnezzars, as near as Elias came to Ahab, when he said, 'It is thou that troublest Israel,' they will boast it over, and think that thou speakest not to them until thou speakest plainly, as the voice spake from heaven, 'To thee be it spoken.' And they must reform the matter, or else God will shew some judgment upon them, as he did here upon this great king Nebuchadnezzar.

Now the decree goeth forth that Nebuchadnezzar shall be king no more, 'Thy kingdom is departed from thee.' This is such a saying, as if Nebuchadnezzar had thought of it before, he would have wept when he vaunted, to think that his honour was going from him when he thought it was coming to him; and yet his kingdom was not departed from him, and yet God saith, 'Thy kingdom is departed from thee,' because the decree was passed which should as surely come to pass, as if it were past already. Therefore because we care not so long as the prophet saith, we shall die, we shall suffer, we shall answer, he leaveth *shall* and saith *now*, as God said to Abimelech, 'Thou *art* a dead man,' not thou *shalt* die, but thou *art* dead, which roused him more than if he had threatened him an hundred deaths, because he thought that he should die presently. So the Holy Ghost is forced, as it were, to exceed and speak more than we think he should speak, for the hardness of our hearts, which hear like stones and go like snails. If we have but a week

to repent, we will defer it to the last day, that we may sin all the rest.

Therefore it was meet to say, 'Thy kingdom is departed from thee.' That seeing his judgment should not stay, he should not stay his repentance. If this voice had said, Thy Babel shall sink as Nimrod's Babel did, it seemeth he would have thought his honour buried; but when he was stripped, not only of his palace, but also of his kingdom, what heavy news was this unto him, which thought himself equal with God, and now may not be a king! But when he was thrust among beasts to eat grass with oxen, what a downfall was this, to be brought under all his subjects, which spake even now as though there were none but he; and now his servant's servant would not be like unto him! So the King of kings will be honoured of kings, as they are of their subjects, or else he will tread upon their crowns, and they shall hear the same at last, 'Thy kingdom shall depart from thee.'

Now followeth the execution of his judgment, for Daniel saith, 'The same hour all this was fulfilled.' So he sheweth the order of it. As a prisoner is brought to the bar, and led to a gibbet, so the king was drawn from his throne, and turned into the wilderness, where he abode among wild beasts so long, 'till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.' When God began he made haste, as it was long before he spoke; but when he spoke he did it, and effected in an hour all that the dream and the prophet had foretold.

Then was fulfilled, 'the pride of man shall bring him low.' Even in the hour that Nebuchadnezzar advanced himself more than before, in the same hour he was brought under all his subjects, all his servants and pages; so he which setteth up can pull down, he which gave can take, he which made can destroy. Therefore let no man vaunt, though he were a king, of his house, or land, or farm, or children, but know that he should have nothing, if God did not regard him more than others: and think when thou dost read this story, whether thou be not as proud of thy wealth as Nebuchadnezzar was of his palace; whether thou be not as proud of thy children as Nebuchadnezzar was of his kingdom; whether thou be not as proud of thy parentage as Nebuchadnezzar was of his honour; whether thou be not so proud of thy learning as Nebuchadnezzar was of his train. If thou be so proud, then God doth say no more, 'O king, to thee be it spoken,' but, O subject, to thee be it spoken, these blessings shall be taken from thee. For, hath God taken no man's kingdom from him but Nebuchadnezzar's? Hath he taken no

man's office from him but Judas's? Hath he taken no man's riches from him but Job's? How did Antiochus, and Julian, and Herod, and Saul, and Athaliah, and Jezebel, and Richard the Third go from their thrones, as if God had pulled them out by the ears! He had no respect to their persons, but used them like beasts, as he did Nebuchadnezzar, and fulfilled his threatenings; the candle of the wicked shall be put out. Therefore, as Christ saith unto them which turn back, 'Remember Lot's wife;' so I may say to them which bear high minds, and proud looks, and stout words, Remember king Nebuchadnezzar, how God resisteth the proud. Now, if any man long to be resolved how this king was changed to a beast, he must not imagine any strange metamorphosis, or popish transubstantiation, as though his shape were altered, or his manhood removed, or that he put on horns and hoofs, as poets feign Actæon; for the voice doth not say that he should become a beast, but that he should dwell with the beasts. Daniel doth not say that his head, or arms, or legs were transformed; but that the hair of his head, and the nails of his fingers, did grow like eagles' feathers, and like birds' claws, as every man's hair and nails will do if he do not pare them.

Lastly, Nebuchadnezzar saith not that his shape was restored unto him, but that his understanding was restored unto him; all which declare that he was not changed in body, but in mind, not in shape, but in quality. A savage mind came on him, like that which drave Cain from the company of men, Gen. iv. 12, and he became like a satyr, or wild man, which differeth not from a beast but in shape; though he was not turned to a beast, yet this was a strange alteration to be so changed in an hour, that his nobles abhorred him, his subjects despised him, his servants forsook him, none would company with him but the beasts. Consider this, all that advance yourselves against God, and despise his word, as Nebuchadnezzar did. Take warning by a king, which even now walked in his galleries, and his nobles served him in his palace with all dishes that the air, or sea, or land could afford; now he is turned to graze and feed like an ox with the beasts in the wilderness. This was to shew that God makes no more account of the wicked than of beasts, and therefore the Holy Ghost calleth them often by the name of beasts; shewing how that sin and pleasure make them like beasts. When they have abused their wits often, and perverted their reason, at last God taketh their understanding from them, and they become like beasts, loathsome to themselves and others. Many such beasts we have still like Nebuchadnezzar, who were fitter to live in the

desert among lions, where they might not annoy others, than in towns amongst men, where they infect more than the plague. Thus, if you have not considered the beastliness of sin, look upon Nebuchadnezzar like a beast. If you would see the guilt of it, look upon wandering Cain, Gen. iv. 14. If you would see the frenzy of it, look upon frantic Saul, 1 Sam. xvi. 14. If thou wouldst see the fear of it, look upon trembling Belshazzar, Dan. v. 6. If thou wilt see the shame of it, look upon Haman hanging upon his own gallows, Esther vii. 10. If thou wilt see the end of it, look upon the glutton frying in hell, Luke xvi. 23. These are the pictures of sin, which God hath set for a terror before us; like the pillar of salt, Gen. xix. 20, or Achan's sepulchre to speak to us, Josh. vii. 29. Take heed by those; when I have warned you, as I have warned them, I will punish you, as I punished them. This is the epitaph, as it were, which God engraveth upon Nebuchadnezzar's sepulchre: —*Be thou an example to kings and rulers, for all the children of pride to beware how they set themselves against him who advanced them.*

Thus he which sets up can pull down. Did not I send thee dreams to warn thee? Did not I send a prophet to warn thee? If either of them would have served, thou mightest have ruled still, and walked in thy galleries, and feasted in thy palace, and judged upon thy throne, and died a king; but now thy kingdom is departed from thee. Who would be like Nebuchadnezzar, now he is like a beast? If this heathen was thus challenged for his warning, which had heard but one prophet, we may tremble to think what we shall answer for our warnings, which have been threatened as often as the Israelites, and yet provoke the Lord while he serveth us, like those which curse the sun, while he shineth upon them.

Thus you have seen the fall of pride. Even now he said, 'Is not this great Babel?' Now he may say, Is not this unhappy Babel? Even now he said, 'which I have built by the might of my power;' and now he may say, which I have built by the vanity of my pride. Even now he said, 'for the honour of my majesty;' now he may say, for the ruin of my kingdom. Yet after this he rose again and came to himself, and received his kingdom, and honoured him which punished him so. But the time will prevent me to speak of his restitution, therefore here I end.

# THE RESTITUTION OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

*And at the end of those days, I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes unto heaven, and my understanding was restored unto me, and I gave thanks unto the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose power is an everlasting power, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants are reputed as nothing: and according to his will he worketh in the army of heaven, and in the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, Why doest thou so? At the same time I had my understanding restored unto me, and I returned to the honour of my kingdom; my glory, and my beauty was restored unto me: and my counsellors, and my princes sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and my glory was augmented towards me. Now, therefore, I Nebuchadnezzar praise, and extol, and magnify the King of heaven, whose works are all truth, and his ways judgment; and those that walk in pride, he is able to abase.*—DANIEL IV. 34–37.

Now are we come to his restitution. First, Nebuchadnezzar was humbled as God humbleth his enemies; now he is humbled as God humbleth his children; that although he had more honour than he had before, yet he is not proud of it as he was before, but crieth with the prophet David, Ps. cxv. 1, 'Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name, give the glory.' So he which said, not only with heart, but almost with mouth too, There is no God, now with heart and mouth honoureth none but God; his pride and his fall Daniel declared, but when he came to his restitution, he makes Nebuchadnezzar to speak himself, and give thanks in his own person, like a witness brought in to testify the truth of this wonderful story.

When the prophet had shewed how this king vaunted, and how he was debased for it, presently after he had spoken it, he calls in as it were the king himself to witness his report, and declares how he was raised again, like a man which having received grace from a prince or great person, is brought in before him to give thanks for his favour received, and then is dismissed.

In these verses two things shew themselves at the first view, that is, Nebuchadnezzar's restitution, and his thankfulness in his restitution. First, he sheweth the time when he was restored, in these words, 'At the end of these days,' then he sheweth the manner how he was restored, in these words, 'I Nebuchadnezzar lift up my eyes to heaven, and mine understanding was restored to me.' In his thankfulness, first, he extolleth God's power in setting him up, and pulling him down, and raising him again; then he commendeth God's justice and truth, which deserves to be praised for his judgments, as much as for his mercy, as though he rejoiced that God hath made him like a beast, that he might die like a man.

'At the end of these days.' As Daniel noted the time of his pride when he walked in his palace, to shew how pride grows out of buildings, and wealth, and apparel, and such roots, so he noteth the time of his fall, 'while the words were in his mouth,' to shew that he was punished for his pride and ignorance, that he might know where to begin his conversion, and abate his pride. And when he had taken away the cause, then God would take away the punishment, so likewise he noteth the time of his restitution, 'at the end of these days,' that is, after seven years were expired, to shew how long the sickness of pride is in curing, and to shew how everything was fulfilled which was prophesied, even to the point of time, for it was told him by Daniel, that he should be like a beast seven years; therefore Nebuchadnezzar is prompt as it were to confess the truth, and say as the prophet said, 'At the end of these days,' that is, at the end of seven years, 'I Nebuchadnezzar was restored to my kingdom,' as Daniel told me. Yet another note is set upon this beast: lest we should think that God only regardeth the season, and thinks seven years' punishment enough for such a sin, he saith not barely, that his understanding and honour was restored unto him when seven years were ended, but that they were restored unto him when he began to lift up his eyes to heaven, to shew that this blessing came from above, and that he which had humbled him had restored him again; as if he should say to all that are cast down with sickness, or poverty, or infamy, or any trouble whatsoever in body or mind, He which hath humbled you will raise you, as he hath

done me ; but you must look up unto heaven, and lift up your hearts unto him, and then your understanding, and comfort, and wealth, and pleasure, and health, and liberty, and good name, and all, shall return unto you again, like Job's sheep, and camels, and oxen, in greater number than he had before. As all the blessings of God returned to Nebuchadnezzar when he looked up to heaven, so they shall come back like a river upon you, when your eyes can go by these vainities, and look upon him which looks upon you, or else seven and seven years shall pass over you, and you shall be never the better, but worse and worse, like Saul, which was vexed more and more, till he had killed himself.

Therefore, as the Jews looked up to the brazen serpent, which was a figure of Christ, when they would be healed, Num. xxi. 8, so all that would recover that which they have lost, or obtain that which they want, Nebuchadnezzar doth teach them here to lift up their eyes to heaven, from whence, saith Christ, cometh every blessing of man. 'At the end of these days, I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes,' &c. Like a man which is wakened out of a long trance, now he began to stir and lift up his eyes. When the heart is once lift up, it will lift up the eyes, and the hand, and voice, and all to heaven. He which never looked up to heaven so long as his comfort was upon the earth, now his mind is changed, his looks, and gestures, and speeches, and all are changed with it, as though God would shew a visible difference between the spiritual and carnal, even in their looks and gestures, as there is between a child and an old man. The spiritual minds are heavenly, and look up, because their joy is above ; the carnal minds are earthly, and look down, like beasts, because their treasure is below. As the serpent grovels upon the ground, Gen. iii. 14, so doth the serpent's seed, and hath not so much as the countenance of grace.

Therefore, by lifting up his eyes to heaven is signified that the time was come which the Lord had set down that he should be like a beast, until he had learned that lesson, 'that the most High beareth rule over the sons of men.' Therefore Nebuchadnezzar sheweth that he hath learned his lesson ; for he looked not up to heaven to behold the sun, the moon, or the stars, like an astronomer ; but thinking how he had set himself against heaven, from whence came all his honour, in a godly shame and holy anger toward himself he turns his face from earth to heaven, to magnify him which had humbled him, that so contemned him which advanced him. Now he talks no more of his palace, nor his power, nor his majesty, though it be greater than it was ; but he looked above his own

palace to another palace, from whence that terrible voice came down unto him, 'Thy kingdom is departed from thee;' which expresseth his contrite heart and wounded spirit, how many passions battled within, as if he should chide himself and say, Unthankful man, my power ever descended from above, and I ever looked upon the earth; and mine honour came down from heaven, and I never lift up mine eyes before; but now, saith he, go up, my voice, and my hands, and my eyes. How long will ye pore upon the earth like a beast? So he lifted up his eyes unto heaven. After he had lifted up his eyes, he beginneth to pray, and praise, and give thanks to God, which sheweth that he did not only lift up his eyes, but his heart too; for unless we can say with David, 'I lift up my heart,' Ps. xxv. 1, it is in vain to lift up eyes, or hands, or voice, as the hypocrites do, because he which is a Spirit will be worshipped in spirit,' John iv. Therefore Mary saith, 'My heart doth magnify the Lord,' Luke i. 46. As for the infidels and idolaters, they have no hearty service, but their religion is like an occupation which is done with the body; for when we read of the sacrifice or prayers of the idolaters and infidels, we do not find that they lift up their hearts to their idols, but their hands, or their eyes, or their voice, as the Baalites roared to Baal, 1 Kings xviii. 28; and the mariners cried to their sea-gods, Jonas i. 5; and the Ephesians shouted to Diana, Acts xix. 28; but, the lifting up of the heart is the holy service, and alway appropriate unto God, which saith, 'My son, give me thy heart,' Prov. xxiii. 26. Therefore now Nebuchadnezzar lifts up his heart to God, shewing that he had learned that lesson which God gave him seven years to study, that 'the most High beareth rule over the sons of men,' &c.

Now God thinks the time long enough; and as he reformed the ground after the flood with fruit, and herbs, and flowers again, so he reformed Nebuchadnezzar with understanding, and beauty, and honour again. As when he repented himself and said, I will drown the earth no more, Gen. viii. 21, so I will chase Nebuchadnezzar no more. Now he knows a King above him, he shall be a king again; now he seeks my honour, I will give him honour; now he magnifieth him which debased him, I will return to exalt him. So the voice which thundered from heaven, 'Thy kingdom is departed from thee,' sounds again, 'Thy kingdom is restored to thee.' For it was not told that he should be like a beast until he died, but 'until he knew that the Most High beareth rule over the sons of men.' Therefore, when he knew this, nothing could stay him from his kingdom, no more than they could stay him in it before. Thus the displeasure

of God is but an *interim*, until we know something that we should know, and then Nebuchadnezzar shall be king again, then the sick man shall be whole again, then the bondman shall be free again, then the poor man shall be rich again. His mercies are called everlasting, because they endure for ever, Ps. cxxxvi. 1, 2; but his anger is compared to the clouds, because it lasteth but a season. Whom he loveth, he loveth to the end; but whom he scourgeth, he scourgeth to repent. As Hezekiah was sick until he wept, Nebuchadnezzar was banished but until he repented. Now the first cure of the king's restitution was of his mind: 'Mine understanding,' saith Nebuchadnezzar, 'was restored unto me.' To shew what an inestimable gift our understanding and reason is, whereby we differ from beasts, for which we cannot be thankful enough, therefore he records it twice, as though his heart did flow with gladness, and his tongue could not choose but speak often of it, as a man thinketh and speaketh of that which he loveth: 'Mine understanding was restored unto me,' &c. That which was first taken away was first restored again, which so soon as it was gone, he was counted a man no more, but a beast. As David saith, 'Like horse and mule which have no understanding,' Ps. xxxii. 9, counting them which are void of understanding no better than horse and mule. Therefore, they which have lost their understanding at the taverns, as many here have done sometimes, and they which understand not yet what is the book of God, are but horse and mule, though they bear the visors of men. After he had said, 'Mine understanding was restored to me,' he annexeth, 'mine honour was restored to me;' so he grew to a king again. As he was wont to put on one robe after another when he was a king, so when God would make him a king again, first he puts upon him the robe of understanding, as it were the foundation of a king, like the princely spirit which came upon Saul, 1 Sam. x. 9; and when he had a prince's heart, then God gave him a prince's power, and proclaimed, like a voice from heaven, NEBUCHADNEZZAR, KING OF BABEL: so gloriously he rose again like the sun, with a triumph of his restitution, and welcome of his subjects, like the shout which went before Solomon, 1 Kings i. 34. One would think, when Nebuchadnezzar was a king, God would never have made him like a beast, nor after have made him a king again; for who would suffer a beast to rule over them, seeing such stomachs are in men that they will hardly endure any rulers? Therefore it is strange that these men would suffer one to rule over them that had been seven years like a beast; it is even as if one had lain seven years in the grave, and after came to challenge his

house and goods from them which have it in possession, and count it their own. I think such a one should have so cold a suit, that unless it were some few that loved him while he lived, he might go again to his grave for a house to dwell in; so nobody looketh now for Nebuchadnezzar to come out of the wilderness; he was the unlikeliest man in the world to be a king after such a change; but see what God can do, though all be against it, he which made a king like a beast, raised a king of a beast.

'Mine understanding,' saith Nebuchadnezzar, 'was restored to me;' and more than that, 'mine honour was augmented,' more than it was when I was so proud of it. As God turned his heart, so he turned the hearts of his nobles and people, that they received him for their king again, and sought unto him, and reverenced him, for all the disgrace which they had seen, which made them before to contemn him like a beast.

Here a wise man may study and wonder, like Elisha, when his master was rapt to heaven. For as though a snuff had been taken from the ground, and set in the candlestick again, and shined brighter than it did before; so Nebuchadnezzar was raised from the dust and set in the throne; even now no man cared for him, and now no man dare displease him. That which Solomon saith in Prov. xvi. 7, 'When the ways of a man please the Lord, he will make all his enemies at peace with him;' so when Nebuchadnezzar pleased the Lord, God gave him grace with men, and his glory was augmented: 'My glory was increased,' &c. That is, he received not only his kingdom, and power, and honour again, but he received usury of them. For this seven years' banishment they had been put out seven years to the bank, for him to receive more when he came again; so when he sought his own honour, honour departed from him, his palace could not hold it, his treasures could not redeem it, his guard could not stay it, but pride chased it away whilst he followed after it. But when he sought God's honour, and cared not for his own, honour was increased, according to that, 1 Sam. ii. 30, 'I will honour them that honour me.'

What would Nebuchadnezzar say to our Nebuchadnezzars, if he were living, which think it against their honour to seek Christ's honour, and that if his kingdom went up, their kingdom should go down: like Herod, which thought he could not be king if Christ should reign; and the pharisees, which thought they should be despised, if Christ were regarded?

If Nebuchadnezzar's honour came unto him for the honour which he gave to God, how long will their honour last, which eat and

drink, give and take, set up and pull down, and do all that they do to honour themselves? As Nebuchadnezzar built Babel, until that voice came thundering from heaven, 'Thy kingdom is departed from thee,' thy office is departed from thee, thy life is departed from thee. Some have exalted themselves like Nebuchadnezzar, and are not fallen yet; some mounted up have fallen lower and lower, like Balaam, but they are not yet at the ground; they have ruled like beasts longer than Nebuchadnezzar, and yet look not up to heaven that they may be changed. Thus Nebuchadnezzar is welcome to his throne again.

Now he hath received grace, let us examine his thankfulness. If you mark how every thing comes in his order, you shall see a marvellous consequence observed both in his fall and restitution. When he looked upon his palace, then he waxed proud; when he waxed proud, then God threatened him; when he was threatened, then God banished him; when he was banished, then he lift up his eyes to heaven; when he lift up his eyes to heaven, his understanding came unto him; when his understanding came unto him, then he gave thanks to God; shewing us the use of our understanding, why God hath given reason unto men, viz., to serve him and praise him upon earth. As Nebuchadnezzar worshipped God so soon as he came to his understanding, so we, as soon as we come to years of discretion, and begin to understand, we should begin a new life, and serve him whom all creatures do serve with us, or else our understanding is in vain, and we are beasts still; for by this Nebuchadnezzar shews that he had understanding, and was like a man, because he gave praise to God, and was moved in heart to worship him which made him, according to that definition that David maketh of understanding: Ps. cxi. 10, 'They which observe them have a good understanding.' They which observe the commandments have a good understanding; not they which speak of the commandments, nor they which write of the commandments, nor they which preach of the commandments, but they which keep the commandments, have a good understanding. The rest have a false understanding, a vain understanding, an understanding like that of the scribes and pharisees, which was enough to condemn them, but not to save them.

By this every man should try his wisdom, for so soon as understanding cometh to him, as it came to Nebuchadnezzar, it will extort prayer and obedience from him whether he will or no; therefore our Nebuchadnezzars are beasts still, for this is no part of their understanding.

But he which can go beyond all in shifts and policy, is counted the wisest man in court and city. Oh, if Machiavel had lived in our country, what a monarch should he be! To what honour, and wealth, and power, and credit, might he have risen unto in short time, whether he had been a lawyer, or a courtier, or a prelate! Methinks I see how many fingers would point at him in the streets, as they do at his apes, and say, There goeth a deep fellow; he hath more wit in his little finger than the rest in their whole body. You talk of sectaries, how fast they grow, and how fast they breed; I warrant you, where any sectary hath one son, Machiavel hath a score, and those not the brats, but the fatlings of the land; which, if they had but a dram of religion for an ounce of their policy, they might go like saints among men. But we speak to the belly that hath no ears.

Now let us see the parts of this king's confession, that we may see how his thankfulness did answer to his sin. Before, he had robbed God of his honour; now, as though he came to make restitution, he brings praise, and thanks, and glory in his mouth.

First, He advanceth God's power, and saith, that his 'kingdom is an everlasting kingdom;' in which words he confesseth that God was above him, because that his kingdom was not an everlasting kingdom, but a momentary kingdom, like a spark which riseth from the fire, and falleth into the fire again. Therefore he sheweth what a fool he was to vaunt of his kingdom, as though it were like God's kingdom, which lasteth for ever.

Secondly, He magnifieth the power of God, and saith, that God 'doth what he listeth both in heaven and earth,' and nothing can hinder him, or 'say unto him, What dost thou?' Under which words he confesseth again that God was above him, because he could not reign as he listed; for when he thought to live at his pleasure, he was thrust out at doors, and God said not to him, What dost thou? but 'Thy kingdom shall depart from thee.' Therefore he sheweth what a fool he was to vaunt of his power, as though it had been like God's power, which cannot be checked.

Thirdly, He commendeth the justice of God, and saith, that his works were all truth, and his ways were all judgment. Under which words, he confesseth again that God was above him; for his ways were all errors, and his works were all sins, as the end proved. Therefore he shews what a fool he was to vaunt of his works, as though they had been like God's works, which cannot be blamed; therefore he concludes, 'I Nebuchadnezzar praise, and extol, and magnify the King of heaven.' When he lighted upon the right

string, mark how he harps upon it, and doubles it, and trebles it, like a bond which is ratified with many words of like sense; so he ratifieth his bond to God with many words of like meaning: 'I will praise, and extol, and magnify the King of heaven;' as if he would praise him, and more than praise him. They which love with the heart, and repent from the bottom, praise and praise, pray and pray, give and give, serve and serve; that is, when they have served him, they are ready to serve him again.

Here is a glass for all the children of pride. First, look upon Nebuchadnezzar, you that are great men like Nebuchadnezzar; for thus will God make his example of great men, because they should be examples to others. Many wicked men died in Jewry, and scarce a man was by to see their end; but Herod was stricken before the people, that all might see, because he was a wicked king. There were many in Babel as proud as Nebuchadnezzar, but none but Nebuchadnezzar was made like a beast, because he was a proud king; so God doth stomach sin in those that bear his own person. As princes use to pick those that are principal and chief in rebellion, to make them examples of terror to others, which were ringleaders in the treason; so God doth bend his shot against the captains of his enemies, like the king of Aram, which charged his soldiers that they should fight with none but against Ahab the king, as it is written in 2 Chron. xviii. 30. For as Solomon saith in Prov. xix. 25, 'Strike the strong, and the rest will beware;' so justice shewed upon a ruler or great personage doth terrify many. If we could but see one of our Nebuchadnezzars so degraded, it would make all the rest better in their office, and think when they sit in their majesties, as queen Esther did, that their power is given them for the church, and not against the church. Paul being before Festus and Agrippa, wished not unto the king Agrippa more wealth, or more honour, or more riches, but more religion, which is the greatest want of princes and magistrates. They sit in God's chair, and are called gods, but are not like God, but like Mammon, except their names and their crowns; peradventure a David, or a Solomon, a Joshua, that is, a few that remember whose person they bear; the rest are like Saul, and Herod, and Nebuchadnezzar, which know not from whom their kingdoms come. Nebuchadnezzar built for his honour, and they build for their honour; Nebuchadnezzar gathered for his wealth, and they gather for their wealth; Nebuchadnezzar sought after his pleasure, and they seek after their pleasure; Nebuchadnezzar vaunted of his power, and they vaunt of their power; what did Nebuchadnezzar which they do not, but

repent, which they do not? I cannot wish them beasts to do them good like Nebuchadnezzar, because it is a question whether they are not worse than beasts already; but if we drive them out of their palaces to live like beasts in the wilderness, it were a good riddance, for there they should do less harm. Where now their proud horns do gore others, and their hoof is up to strike every one that is better than themselves; which maketh many fly into the wilderness from their house, and church, and calling, lest they should fall into their clutches. The Lord which restored Nebuchadnezzar from the likeness of a beast, restore them to the likeness of men, or else fright them like Nebuchadnezzar to run from their rooms, that better may have their places!

Thus you see Nebuchadnezzar was made like a beast, that he might die like a man, for he could never learn from whence his kingdom came, until he had been apprentice seven years unto the cross; and when he perceived who took his kingdom from him, then he perceived also who gave his kingdom to him, and learned his thankfulness in the wilderness, when all the blessings were gone, which he should have been thankful for. He thought that God was nobody, until he became like nobody himself; and then who but God? no power but of him, no honour but from him. His first honour came from God as well as his last; but then he was like a beast which knew not his owner, like a babe which knew not his father, like an image which knows not his maker; but now he knoweth from whom kings reign, and hath learned to say *thy kingdom*, as well as *my kingdom*, and is like to the elders in the Revelation, which cast down their crowns before the Lamb.

Such a schoolmaster is affliction, to teach that which prophets and angels cannot teach. For the prophet and his dream had told him as much before, yet he could never say, 'The Lord hath given,' before he did see how the Lord had taken. They say a friend is never known before he be lost; so when God fled, then Nebuchadnezzar followed, but when God called, then Nebuchadnezzar contemned. When he hath all things, he is unthankful; and when he hath nothing, he beginneth to be thankful.

So we must learn God's love out of his wrath, and spell his goodness out of his justice; therefore we preach judgment unto you, to make you fly unto mercy; we denounce the law against you, to make you love the gospel; we shew you hell, to make you seek heaven. Because we are like Pharaoh his sorcerers, though we receive never so much, yet we never say, the finger of God hath done this; but when he begins to plague us, then we cry, the finger

of God hath done this; therefore if we will not be invited, it is good to be compelled. To conclude: he which made Nebuchadnezzar a king when he was like a beast, is he which makes them rich which were poor, and he which makes them free which were bound, and he which makes them beloved which were hated, and he which makes them wise which were rude, and he which makes them whole which were sick. They must stay a time, seven days, or seven weeks, or seven months, or seven years, as Nebuchadnezzar did, and when they are ready for it, it will come suddenly, as the angels came to refresh Christ so soon as he was hungry. Yet a little while, a little longer comfort is on foot, and that goodness which is coming will come, as the sun which was rising is risen; for as Nebuchadnezzar said, 'Mine honour was restored to me,' so I am sure many many here may say, My right was restored to me, my liberty was restored to me, my health was restored to me, my good name was restored to me, in less time than Nebuchadnezzar's honour was. And what then? 'Therefore I Nebuchadnezzar praise, and extol, and magnify the King of heaven, whose works are all truth, and his ways judgment, and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.' This is the conclusion of all God's benefits; they which do not praise and extol the King of heaven are worse than Nebuchadnezzar.

Therefore let all which said in their hearts like Nebuchadnezzar, Is not this the house which I have built? is not this the land which I have purchased? is not this the money which I have gathered? are not these the children which I have begotten? say now with Nebuchadnezzar, For all, I praise, and extol, and magnify the King of heaven, which can take all again, as he did from Nebuchadnezzar.

Thus you have seen pride and humility, one pulling Nebuchadnezzar out of his throne, the other lifting him into his throne; whereby they which stand may take heed lest they fall, and they which are fallen may learn to rise again.

# A DISSUASION FROM PRIDE, AND AN EXHORTATION TO HUMILITY.

# A DISSUASION FROM PRIDE, AND AN EXHORTATION TO HUMILITY.

*God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*—1 PET. V. 5.

SAINT Peter teaching every man his duty, how one should behave himself to another, exhorteth all men to be humble, and abstain from pride; as though humility were the bond of all duties, like a list, which holdeth men in a compass, and pride were the make-bait over all the world: to which Solomon giveth witness, Prov. xiii. 10, saying, 'Only by pride man maketh contention;' because pride maketh every one think better of himself than of others, whereby he scorneth to give place to the other; and therefore, when neither party will yield, as Abraham did to Lot, Gen. xiii. 2, how should there be any peace? Thus pride doth break the peace, and humility doth set it again; therefore, to toll men from pride to humility, as it were from the concubine to the right wife, the apostle sheweth how God is affected to pride, and what mind he beareth to humility: 'God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble;' as if he should whisper men in the ears, and say, Take heed how you company with pride, or give entertainment to her, for she is not Cæsar's friend; the king counteth her his enemy, and all that take her part; she hath been suspected ever since the angels rebelled in heaven, and Adam sought to be equal with God, Gen. iii.; therefore, his majesty hath a stitch against her, as Solomon had to Shimei, 1 Kings ii. 36, and would not have her favourites come in his court unless they hold down their mace, stoop when they enter. But if you can get in with humility, and wear the colours of lowliness, then you may go boldly, and stand in

the king's sight, and step to his chamber of presence, and put up your petitions, and come to honour. For humility is very gracious with him, and so near of his counsel, that as David and Solomon say, he committeth all his secrets to her, Prov. iii. 32. Ps. xxv. This is Peter's meaning, that the humble shall find grace with God and men; as we read of David and John Baptist, according to that in Ps. i. 4, 'All things which he doth shall prosper;' but the proud shall be troubled and crossed, and when they would do best they shall do worst; when they would grace themselves, they shall shame themselves; and God will be to them like the spirit of Saul, which tormented him wheresoever he went. This sentence is repeated again, James iv. 6. The like sentence to this is in Prov. iii. 34, where he saith, 'With the scornful he scorneth, but he giveth grace to the humble.' The like sentence is again in Prov. xvi. 18, where he saith, 'Pride goeth before destruction;' and in Prov. xviii. 12, 'Before honour goeth humility.' The like sentence is again in Prov. xxix. 23, where he saith, 'The pride of man shall bring him low, but the humble in spirit shall enjoy glory.'

The like sentence is again in Luke i. 52, where the virgin sings, 'He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek,' that, as it were, by two or three witnesses, pride might be condemned and humility acquitted. One is to God like Jacob, of whom he saith, 'Jacob have I loved,' Rom. ix. 13, Mal. i. 3; the other is to God like Esau, of whom he saith, 'Esau have I hated.' Isaac loved Esau because he loved venison, but Rebekah loved Jacob because he was loved of God, Gen. xxv. 28. So the proud are in the king's court, because they seek honour; but the humble are in God's courts, because they contemn honour. As he saith in Prov. iii. 34, 'With the froward he will shew himself froward.' So he threateneth here, that with the proud he will shew himself proud, that is, if they challenge, he will defend; if they will provoke him, he will resist them; if they will climb higher than their compass, he will pull them lower than their will.

Peter speaks of the proud, as if they did challenge God like champions, and provoke him like rebels, so that, unless he did resist them, they would go about to deprive him of his rule, as Korah, Dathan, and Abiram undermined Moses, Num. xvi. 2. For so the proud man saith, I will be like the highest, Isa. xiv., and, if he could, above the highest too. This is the creature that was taken out of the dust, Gen. ii. 7, and so soon as he was made, he opposeth himself against that majesty which the angels adore, the thrones worship, the devils fear, and the heavens obey. How

many sins are in this sinful world! and yet, as Solomon saith of the good wife, Prov. xxxi. 29, 'Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou surmountest them all.' So I may say of pride, many sins have done wickedly, but thou surmountest them all; for the wrathful man, the prodigal man, the lascivious man, the surfeiting man, the slothful man, is rather an enemy to himself than to God; the envious man, the covetous man, the deceitful man, the ungrateful man, is rather an enemy to men than to God; but the proud man sets himself against God, because he doth against his laws, he maketh himself equal with God, because he doth all without God, and craves no help of him; he exalteth himself above God, because he will have his own will, though it be contrary to God's will. As the humble man saith, 'Not unto us, Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give the glory,' Ps. cxv. 1.; so the proud man saith, Not unto him, not unto him, but unto us give the glory. Like unto Herod, which took the name of God, and was honoured of all but the worms, and they shewed that he was not a God, but a man, Acts xii. 21. Therefore the proud men may be called God's enemies, because, as the covetous pull riches from men, so the proud pull honour from God. Beside, the proud man hath no cause to be proud, as other sinners have; the covetous for riches, the ambitious for honour, the voluptuous for pleasure, the envious for wrong, the slothful for ease; but the proud man hath no cause to be proud, but pride itself, which saith, like Pharaoh, 'I will not obey,' Exod. v. 2. Therefore God is specially said to resist the proud, because the proud resist him. Here is heaven against earth, the Creator against the creature, the Father against the Son, the Lord against the servant, the Prince against the subject: who is like to win the field? 'If the Lord justify,' saith Paul, 'who shall condemn?' So, if the Lord resist, who shall defend? If his law come with thunder, and lightning, and tempest, with what terror will he come himself! It was but a brag when the king of Judah proclaimed war against the king of Aram, and said, 'No man shall deliver them out of my hands;' but it is true when God saith, No man shall deliver them out of my hands. Therefore the author to the Hebrews saith, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God,' Heb. x., for he ever overcometh. Therefore, when the Egyptians perceived that God fought against them, they cried, 'We will fly, we will fly; for God fighteth against us,' Exod. xiv. 25. So the proud may cry, I will fly, I will fly; for God fighteth against us. When the king of Judah proclaimed war against the king of Israel, the king of Israel returned

answer, that the thistle rebelled against the cedar, 2 Kings xiv. 9; and yet there was but king against king, a man against a man: how much rather may the King of heaven answer this proud earth, the thistle rebelleth against the cedar! The giant durst challenge but one of the host of Israel, 1 Sam. xvii. 2; but the Lord challengeth all the host of pride. Even as he giveth grace to all that are humble, so he resisteth all that are proud. It had been too heavy for them if he had said, the Lord doth not care for them; for God's care preserveth us, and our own care doth but trouble us: but to say that the Lord doth resist them, is as if Michael should denounce war with the dragon, till he hath cast him into the pit, Rev. xii. 7. This is a martial word, and comes with arms and weapons upon them. If a man should see a lion come upon him, would he not start? If he should see a giant come against him, would he not fear? But now the Lord of hosts, the lion of Judah, which destroyed the giants, is up in arms to resist the proud, and the proud fear not so much as the humble. 'God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble;' but the world resisteth the humble, and giveth grace to the proud, as David notes, Ps. xlix. 18. Men will praise thee, not when thou reformest thyself to God, but when thou dost form thyself to thy lusts; that is, they which will be strutters shall not want flatterers, which will praise everything that they do, and everything that they speak, and everything that they wear, and say it becomes them well to wear long hair; that it becomes them well to wear bellied doublets; that it becomes them well to jet in their going; that it becomes them well to swear in their talking. Now, when they hear men soothe them in their follies, then, think they, we have nothing else to commend us, if men will praise us; for our vanities we will have friends enow. So the humour swelleth, and thinks with itself, if they will look upon me when I do set but a stout face upon it, how would they behold me if I were in apparel! If they do so admire me in silks, how would they cap me, and curtsey me, and worship me, if I were in velvets! If I be so brave in plain velvet, what if my velvet were pinked, or cut, or printed! So they study for fashions, as lawyers do for delays, and count that part naked which is not as gaudy as the rest, till all their body be covered over with pride, as their mind with folly. Therefore David saith, Ps. lxxiii. 6, that pride is as a chain unto them, that is, it goeth round about them like a chain, and makes them think that all men love them, and praise them, and admire them, and worship them for their bravery. Therefore, as Saul said to Samuel, 'Honour me before this people,' so the

proud man saith to his chain, and his ruffs, and his pinks, and his cuts, Honour me before this people. All that he speaketh, or doeth, or weareth, is like Nebuchadnezzar's palace, which he built for his honour, Dan. iv. This is their work so soon as they rise, to put a pedlar's shop upon their backs, and colour their faces, and prick their ruffs, and frizzle their hair, and then their day's work is done, as though their office were to paint a fair image every morning, and at night to blot it out again. From that day that pride is born in the heart of man, as the false prophets were schooled to speak as the king would have them, so their eyes, and feet, and tongues are bound to speak, and look, and walk, as the proud heart doth prompt them. If God were in love with fashions, he were never better served than in this age; for our world is like a pageant, where every man's apparel is better than himself. Once Christ said, that soft clothing is in king's courts, Mat. xi. 8; but now it is crept into every house; then the rich glutton jetted in purple every day, Luke xvi., but now the poor unthrift jets as brave as the glutton, with so many circumstances about him, that if ye could see how pride would walk herself, if she did wear apparel, she would even go like many in the streets, for she could not go braver, nor look stouter, nor mince finer, nor set on more laces, nor make larger cuts, nor carry more trappings about her, than our ruffians and wantons do at this day. How far are these fashions altered from those leather coats which God made in paradise! Gen. iii. 21. If their bodies did change forms so often as their apparel changeth fashions, they should have more shapes than they have fingers and toes. As Jeroboam's wife disguised herself that the prophet might not know her, 1 Kings xiv. 2; so we may think that they disguise themselves that God might not know them; nay, they disguise their bodies so, till they know not themselves; for the servant goeth like the master, the handmaid like her mistress, the subject like the prince, as though he had forgotten his calling, and mistook himself, like a man in the dark, which puts on another man's coat for his own, that is too wide, or too side for his body; so their attires are so unfit for their bodies, so unmeet for their calling, so contrary to nature, that I cannot call them fitter than the monsters of apparel. For the giants were not so monstrous in nature, Gen. vi., as their attires are in fashion; that if they could see their apparel but with the glance of a spiritual eye, how monstrous it makes them (like apes, and puppets, and vices[1]), they would fling

[1] That is, the actors representing the vices in the religious plays or 'mysteries.' —Ed.

away their attire, as David flung away Saul's armour, 1 Sam. xvii. 39; and be as much ashamed of their clothes, as Adam was of his nakedness, Gen. iii. 9.

Pride hath been the deviser of all these vanities, which now neither shame, nor laws, nor preaching can take away; therefore had we not need to shew you how God resisteth this vice, that careth not for any else? Who can tell how this weed groweth, seeing we have nothing to be proud of, but more cause to be ashamed of ourselves, and fly from the face of God and man too, than Adam our Father had? We were earth, we are flesh, and we shall be worms' meat; what cause hath earth, or flesh, or worms' meat to be proud? We are born in sin, we live in misery, we shall die in corruption; what cause hath sin, or misery, or corruption to puff us, but to humble us? There is nothing good which we are proud of; but a wise man is ashamed of the same things whereof we boast. It is a wonder to see how a gay coat, or a gold ring, or a wrought handkerchief can brave a man's mind, that he thinks better of himself that day when he weareth them than any day else, and speaks, and walks, and looks after another fashion than he did before.

If you could say, as the disciples said, Luke x. 17, 'Lord, the devils are subject unto us;' yet, saith the Lord, 'glory not in this.' How many things do we glory in, which we should not, if we may not glory in the gift of miracles! Even as a covetous man is greedy of a halfpenny, and an envious man is angry for a word, so the proud man is proud of a feather. Therefore shall not God resist them which glory in all things but himself, and should glory in nothing but him? As he did emulate that lofty Babel, so he doth resist these lofty minds. But for pride, the angels which are in hell should be in heaven, Jude 6; but for pride, we which are in earth should be in paradise, Gen. iii.; but for pride, Nebuchadnezzar which is in the forest should be in his palace, Dan. iv.; but for pride, Pharaoh, which lies with the fishes, should be with his nobles, Exod. xiv.; no sin hath pulled so many down as this, which promised to set them up. Of all the children of pride, the pope is the father, which sitteth in the temple of God, and is worshipped as God, 2 Thes. ii. 4. The Lord's ministers are called servants, and his ministers are called lords. But for pride, the Pharisees would have received Christ as gently as his disciples; but for pride, Herod would have worshipped Christ as humbly as the shepherds; but for pride, our men would go like Abraham, and our women like Sarah, as they would be called their children; but for pride, noble-

men would come to church as well as the people; but for pride, gentles would abide reproof as well as servants; but for pride, thou wouldst forgive thy brother, and thy brother would forgive thee, and the lawyers should have no work. But when thou thinkest of these things, pride comes in, and saith, Wilt thou go like a haggler, wilt thou follow sermons, wilt thou take the check, wilt thou put up wrong? What will men say? That thou art a mome, and a coward, and a fool, and no man will reverence thee, but every man will contemn and abuse thee. Thus men are fain to put on the livery of pride, as they put on the liveries of noblemen, to shroud and defend them from the contempt of the world. Who hath not felt these counsels in his heart, which would not believe that any pride was in him? Yet as Absalom was a worse son than Adonijah, because Adonijah rebelled against his brother, 1 Kings i. 5, but Absalom rebelled against his father, so pride hath worse children than vanity of apparel. Tyranny in princes, ambition in nobles, rebellion in subjects, disobedience in children, stubbornness in servants; name pride, and thou hast named their mother; therefore shall not God resist pride? which hath sowed so many tares in his ground, that scarce a man can say like David, 'I am not high-minded,' Ps. cxxxi. 1. Give me the minds of all men humbled, and there is nothing left to raise strife in the world. But as James saith, chap. iv. 5, 'The heart of man lusteth after envy,' so the heart of man lusteth after pride; though he have many heart-breaks and pull-downs, and many times no countenance to shew it, yet if a little spark be put to the tow, you shall see how soon this flax will flame; therefore Solomon saith, Eccles. iii. 10, that all the troubles that God layeth upon a man have this purpose, to humble him, as though all troubles were little enough to humble pride, and that but for pride there were no need almost of our troubles. For the avoiding of this vice, God suffereth men to fall into other vices, which men abhor and punish, as theft and fornication, and drunkenness, to make them ashamed by these vices, which were not ashamed of pride. This is an argument, that of all sins pride is the worst, because God suffereth other sins to come and shame us, lest we should be proud. Again, pride hath this property and sleight, that it mixeth itself with our good works, and follows virtue. As from the ashes of a phœnix ariseth another phœnix, so of the ashes of our good works ariseth pride. When the devil cannot stay us from a good work, then he laboureth by all means to make us proud of it, and so he staineth our work, and stealeth our reward. For though a man do

never so much good, yet if he be proud of it he loseth his reward, as the pharisees did; therefore the best, and the wisest, and the holiest men had need to watch this vice; for if they take not great heed, it will make them proud of their wisdom, and of their zeal, and of their goodness. Paul was almost puffed up with revelations, 2 Cor. xii.; Aaron and Miriam began to rebel, because they thought themselves as good as Moses, Num. xii.; and all the fathers of any heresy began their heresy at this, a magnificate opinion of themselves, and an overweening of their own gifts. So pride setteth upon the best, even as the tempter set upon Christ, Mat. iv. Again, a man had need to take heed of pride, for she will not keep counsel; but if he be proud, she will tell that he is proud, and therefore is called an impudent sin, because she descrieth herself in the eye, in the speech, in the gesture, in the look, in the gait, like the drunkard; so that a man cannot be proud and seem humble.

Thus God hath tied a just punishment to this vice, that he which entertaineth the vice which he loveth, should not avoid the name which he abhorreth, but he shall be esteemed proud, and called proud of all that know him; and many that know him not, shall point at him with their fingers in the streets, and say, There goes a proud fellow; which they pronounce of no vice else, but the drunkard, because these two bewray themselves. Thus you see how the proud resist God; now you shall see how God resisteth the proud; they are so heady, that almost none dare resist them but God: 'I will resist them,' saith God. Therefore when he heard the proud man say, in Isa. xiv., 'I will ascend up into heaven,' he answered himself, 'Thou shalt be brought down to the grave. This is he which resisteth the proud. When Haman's wife heard her husband say that Mordecai was against him, because he was an Israelite, she said that her husband should take the foil, and Mordecai should prevail, Esther vi. 13. What if she had heard her husband say, that the Lord of Mordecai was against him? If the servant be so terrible, who dare encounter with his master? God hated Esau, Rom. ix., and how did Esau prosper? Though he was the elder brother, yet he missed the birthright; and though his father loved him, yet he could not bless him, because God hated him, Gen. xxvii. 28. God was wroth with the angels, and drove them out of heaven, Jude 6; God was wroth with Adam, and thrust him out of paradise, Gen. iii.; God was wroth with Nebuchadnezzar, and turned him out of his palace, Dan. iv.; God was wroth with Cain, and though he were the first man that was born of a woman, yet God made him a vagabond upon his own land,

Gen. iv. 12; God was wroth with Saul, and though he was the first king that ever was anointed, yet God made his own hand his executioner, 1 Sam. xxxi. 4; God was wroth with the old world, and though the earth was naked when they were drowned, yet he regarded nothing, but destroyed a world of men together, Gen. vi. This is he which resisted the proud; what shall we do if the world be against us, and the flesh against us, and the devil against us, and God against us too, which should defend us? In heaven, in earth, and in the sea he finds us out. And as the displeasure of a king draweth many enemies with it, so the displeasure of God setteth all his creatures against us; therefore he is called the Lord of hosts, as though he came with an army against us, Isa. i. 24. When he fought with the Aramites, the sun took his part, Joshua x. 13; when he fought against the Sodomites, the fire took his part, Gen. xvi.; when he fought against the Egyptians, the water took his part, Exod. xiv.; when he fought against the murmurers, the earth took his part, Num. xvi.; when he fought against the idolaters, the lions took his part, Dan. iii.; when he fought against the mockers, the bears took his part, 2 Kings ii. 24; this is he which resisteth the proud. What can he hope, which remembereth that God is set against him, and that the Lord of heaven and of earth is his enemy? This thought made the Philistines fly and say, 'God is come into the host,' 1 Sam. iv. 7. No enemy is like this enemy; he ever overcometh, and when he hath overcome, he can cast into hell, and make the devils torment them again; therefore, well might Solomon prophesy, Prov. xxix. 23, 'The pride of man shall bring him low;' for God hath overcome him who brought pride into the world; and as pride brought him low, so Solomon saith it shall bring men low too. What a turn is this, that that which he took like a chain (as David saith) to adorn him, Ps. lxxiii. 6, doth hang him; that which he took to exalt him, doth debase him; that which he took to win love, getteth hatred; that which he took to obtain glory, procureth shame; as if God did take the sword out of his hand, as David took the sword out of Goliath, and slew him with his own weapon! 1 Sam. xvii. 51.

When the pharisee said he was not like the publican, Luke xix. 11, he said true, for then he was not like the publican indeed, because the publican was better than he. So when a proud man thinks best of himself, then God and men think worst of him; all his glory is but like a vapour, which climbeth as though it would go up to heaven, but when it comes to a little height, it falls down again, and never ascends more. So Adam thought that the fair apple should

make him like his Maker, Gen. iii.; but God resisted his pride, and that apple made him like the serpent that tempted him with it. Absalom thought that rebellion would make him a king, 2 Sam. xv. 2; but God resisted his pride, and his rebellion hanged him on a tree. Nimrod thought that Babel should get him a name, Gen. xi; but God resisted his pride, and the name of his building was called *confusion* ever since. Nebuchadnezzar built his palace for his honour, Dan. iv.; but God resisted his pride, and his palace spued him out when his servants remained in it. Shebna builded a sepulchre for his memorial, Isa. xxii.; but God resisted his pride, and buried him in another country, where he had no sepulchre provided. Herod hoped when the people cried at his words, 'It is the voice of God,' that he should be worshipped ever after as God; but God resisted his pride, and before he descended from his throne, the worms so defaced his pomp, that none which called him God would be like unto him. So when women take more pains to dress themselves than they do all the year after, and pay dearer to maintain one vice than they need to learn all virtues, they think to please men by it; but God resisteth their pride, and all that see them, though they cap and curtsey to them, yet they think worse of them, and think that they would not wear these signs of lightness and pride, unless they were light and proud indeed. Thus if their apparel condemn them before men, how will it condemn them before God! If sin did not blind them, would they so deceive themselves to take the contrary way, and think that should honour them which disgraceth others? But as Balaam was stopped and knew not who stopped him, Num. xxii. so they are resisted, and know not who resisteth them. Though they do all to please, yet they can please none: they please not God, for God resisteth them; they please not the humble, for the humble are contrary to them; they please not the proud, for the proud do envy them which strive to be as proud as they; they please not themselves, because they cannot be so proud and brave as they would be, only they content and please the devil, because their pride doth entitle him to them.

Thus much of God's battles against the proud. Here Peter leaveth the proud with this brand in their forehead, 'This is the man whom God resisteth;' then he turneth to the lowly, and comforteth them, 'but he giveth grace to the humble;' as if he should say, You are like John the beloved disciple, which leaned on Christ's bosom, John xiii. 23; though God resisteth the proud, yet he will not frown upon you, but when he resisteth them, he will give grace unto you; as if he should say, The proud are without grace, for God

giveth not grace unto the proud, but to the humble, according to that of Isa. lxvi. 2, 'To him will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite heart, and trembleth at my words;' therefore 'learn of me,' saith Christ, Mat. xi., 'to be humble and meek,' as though the humble and meek were his scholars. Therefore God must needs love the humble, because they are like his Son. They shall have his best gifts, of which he saith, 2 Cor. xii. 9, 'my grace is sufficient;' as if he should say, He which hath given you his grace, can he deny you anything? as Paul saith, 'he which hath given us his Son, will he not give us all things with him?' Therefore grace may be called the gift of gifts, because all gifts come with grace, as the court goeth with the queen. Therefore fear not to be humble, lest you be contemned; for all the promises of God are made to humility, and yet men fear to be humble, lest they should be contemned. Humility did not make John contemptible, but when he refused the name of a prophet, Christ saith, that he was more than a prophet, Mat. xi. 2. Humility did not make Moses contemptible, but as he was the mildest man upon earth, so he was the greatest upon earth, Num. xii. Humility did not make David contemptible, but when he humbled himself, he said unto Michal, I will be more humble yet, and lowly in my own sight, yet thou and thy maids shall honour me, 2 Sam. vi. 22. As Christ ceased not to be a king because he was like a servant, nor to be a lion because he was like a lamb, nor to be God because he was made man, nor to be a judge because he was judged; so a man doth not lose his honour by humility, but he shall be honoured for his humility, as the Son was honoured when he was humbled, Luke xv. 8. Thus humility hath found that which pride sought, like little David, which was least accounted of, and yet got the victory; yea, when no man durst encounter with the giant, 1 Sam. xvii. 28. This is the ladder whereby we must ascend, Gen. xxviii. 12. Pride did cast us down, and humility must raise us up. As the way to heaven is narrow, Mat. vii. 13, so the gate is low, and he had need to stoop which entereth in at it; therefore be not proud, lest God oppose himself against you; but be humble, and the grace of God belongeth to you. So long as thou art proud and readest this sentence, 'God giveth grace to the humble,' thou mayest say to thy soul, Soul, thou hast no part herein, for grace is the portion of the humble, and the dowry of the meek, and the treasure of the lowly; but to thee it is said, 'The Lord resisteth the proud,' as if he should say, 'Avoid Satan,' Mat. iv.; or, 'Depart from me, ye wicked,' Mat. xxv. 45. Thus you see how you may have God your friend or your enemy.

'He resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.' If thou disdain to learn humility of man, learn it of God, who humbled himself from heaven to earth, to exalt thee from earth to heaven, to which kingdom (when the proud shall be shut out) the Lord Jesus bring us for his mercy's sake!

# THE YOUNG MAN'S TASK.

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*Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth.*—ECCLES. XII. 1.

IF it be so, as they say, that none but young men do hear our doctrine, then this text is well chosen for the auditory, to teach young men that, which if they learn, they may say with David, 'I have more understanding than the ancient,' Ps. cxix. 100. All Scripture is man's duty, and answers, like John Baptist, to 'What shall we do?' In 1 John ii. 12, John saith, 'I write unto you babes, I write unto you children, I write unto you fathers, I write unto you old men.' So the word, which is called 'a flying book,' flieth from one age to another, from one sex to another, from one calling to another, till, like a judge, it hath given every man his charge. Among the rest, I may call this Scripture *The young man's task*, wherein the wise man sheweth when is the best time to sow the seed of virtue, that it may bring forth the fruit of life, and make a man always ready to die. Let him remember his Creator in the days of his youth, and all his life shall run in a line, the middle like the beginning, and the end like the middle; as the sun setteth against the place where it rose.

After Solomon had described man, like Martha, troubling and toiling herself about many things; at last he bringeth him to that one thing necessary, which Christ taught Mary, and shews him that if he had begun there at first, he had found that which he sought without trouble, and been happier many years since than he is now. Therefore to them which are young, Solomon shews what advantage they have above the aged; like a ship which seeing another ship sink before her, looks about her, pulls down her sail, turneth her course, and escapes the sands, which would swallow her, as they had done the other.

So they which are young need not try the snares and allurements

of the world, or the issues and effects of sin, which old men have tried before them, but take the trial and experience of others, and go a nearer way to obtain their wished desires. That is this, saith Solomon: if thou wouldst have any settled peace or hearty joy in this vain or transitory world, which thou hast been seeking all the time since thou wert born, thou must 'remember thy Creator,' which did make thee, which hath elected thee, which hath redeemed thee, which daily preserveth thee, which will for ever glorify thee. And as the kind remembrance of a friend doth recreate the mind, so to think and meditate upon God will supply thy thoughts, dispel thy grief, and make thee cheerful, as the sight of the ark comforted David; for joy, and comfort, and pleasure is where God is, as light, and cheerfulness, and beauty is where the sun is. Now, if thou wouldst have this joy, and comfort, and pleasure to be long, and wouldst escape those thousand miseries, vexations, and vanities, which Solomon, by many weary and tedious trials, sought to make naked before thee, and yet held all but vanity when he had found the way, thou must 'remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth' at the first spring-time, and then thy happiness shall be as long as thy life, and all thy thoughts while thou remainest on earth a foretaste of the glory of heaven. This is the sum of Solomon's counsel.

Solomon finds man seeking happiness out of the way, as Esau hunted long for a blessing, and yet went without it. He pities to see him seek and not find, to run and not obtain; therefore he setteth him in the way, like a guide sent from heaven, which often had strayed himself before, and been now recovered to his right way; stands like a mark of knowledge in the turnings that lead unto blind by-ways, to direct all those that pass by, that they may follow the ready path that leadeth to eternal happiness. And because the traveller marcheth cheerfully which knoweth his way before he setteth forth, therefore from the first setting forth, even from the time of youth, when a man beginneth to run his pilgrimage, Solomon tells him how he shall therein prepare himself to walk, and sets him in a fair high way, wherein is no turning either to the right hand or the left, which he calleth the remembrance of God; as if he should say, Walk with God as Enoch did, and remember well that he which shall be thy judge doth see all that thou dost, and heareth thee at every word; and this thought shall keep thee in the way at all times, like the cloud and pillar of fire which went before the children of Israel as well by day as by night, when they travelled in the wilderness.

In the next chapter before, and ver. 9, Solomon said, '*Rejoice*,

O young man, in thy youth;' now he hath changed his note to 'Remember, O young man, in thy youth.' No more *rejoice*, but *remember*. Solomon mocked before, and shewed what they *did* remember; here he shews what they *should* remember. Lest any libertine should misconstrue him, and say, Solomon taught to rejoice, Solomon gave us leave to sin, Solomon said, Do as ye list, for you are young men, and have a privilege to be lascivious and vain; he recants with a breath, and denies forthwith his word, even where he spake it.

What said I? 'Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth'? I would say, 'Remember, O young man, in thy youth.' So God mocks us while we sin, like Macaiah, which bid Ahab fight against Aram, and then forbade him again; so he bids them rejoice, and forbids them again. Rejoice not in thy youth, but repent in thy youth. One would think that Solomon should have given this memorandum rather to old men than to young men, Let them repent which look to die. Oh, saith Jeremiah, Lam. iii. 27, 'It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth.' If it be good to suffer in youth, it is better to learn in youth. Therefore, if David wished that his tongue might cleave to the roof of his mouth if he forgot Jerusalem, Ps. cxxxvii. 6, what are they worthy which forget God, the King of Jerusalem? Can a child forget his father? Is not God our Father? Therefore, who is too young to remember him, seeing the child doth know his father? As the deepest wounds had need to be first tented, so the unstablest minds have need to be first confirmed. In this extremity is youth, as Solomon shews them before he teacheth them; for in the last verse of the former chapter he calleth youth 'vanity,' as if he should speak all evil in a word, and say that youth is even the age of sin. Therefore, when he had shewed young men their folly under the name of vanity, like a good tutor he taketh them to school, and teacheth them their duty, 'Remember thy Creator,' as though all sin were the forgetfulness of God; and all our obedience came from this remembrance, that God created us after his own image, in righteousness and holiness, to serve him here for a while, and after to inherit the joys which he hath himself, which if we did remember, doubtless it would make us ashamed to think, and speak, and do as we are wont. For what man doth remember his Creator, or why he was created, while he sweareth and forsweareth, and maketh his trade of sin, as though there were no God to judge, nor hell to punish? This is because the remembrance of God, which would wake sinners, is so chased from men, for fear it should curb them of their pleasures, that they dare not think of them, but strive

to forget him, that they may sin without fear. Therefore he becometh a schoolmaster for God, and calleth children unto him before they be corrupted, to teach them this one lesson for the guide of their life, 'Remember thy Creator.' To which he draweth them as it were with two cords: the short flight of their youth, and the infinite infirmities of age. To shew how soon our youth is gone, which we think will never have end, Solomon doth not reckon it by years, but by days, 'in the days of thy youth;' so the Scripture numbers our life by days, and hours, and minutes, to teach us to make use of all our time, and every day to think upon the end. Yet, lest they should post over this remembrance unto age, which is the general day that all set to repent, after this verse Solomon brings in the old man deaf, and blind, and lame, and stammering, for the young man to behold, as if he should say, Look, my son, is this man fit to learn, which cannot hear, nor see, nor speak, nor go? Therefore remember thou thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before this dotage come. This then is the level of our message, to hasten them forward which travel towards heaven, because there is a great space between God and us, and much ado to aspire the top of mount Zion, but more ado to aspire the top of the mount of heaven.

Therefore, as Abraham rose early to sacrifice his son in the morning, Gen. xxii. 3, so in the morning of thy life sacrifice thyself to God, and let him which is *Alpha* in everything, be *Alpha* in thy conversion, that is, the beginning as well as the end. Because we are given to set the best last, that we may have a longer time for our sins and pleasures, like the Jews, Hag. i. 2, which said alway, 'the time was not yet come when they should build the temple;' therefore, the Holy Ghost crieth so often, 'This is the acceptable time; this is the day of salvation,' 2 Cor. vi. 2. 'To-day hear his voice,' like Rebekah, which taught her son the nearest way to get the blessing, Gen. xxvii. 9. When Christ went about to cast out devils, they said, that he 'tormented them before the time,' Mat. viii. 29; so whensoever thou goest about to dismiss thy sins and pleasures, though thou stay till thou be an old man, yet they will say still that thou dismissest them before the time. But then is the time, when the devil saith, the time is not yet; for the devil is a liar, and knoweth that with what liquor our vessels be seasoned at first, they will taste of the same ever after, whether it be good or bad. Therefore, as God sueth to have us begin at goodness, so the devil wooes us to begin at wickedness; alleging either that we are not resolved yet to leave our pleasures, or else that God is exceeding merciful to sinners, or else that we shall have space enough to

serve him hereafter. So he stands as it were at the ladder foot, and keeps us off with these weapons, that we cannot get upon the first staff, but one thought or other pulleth us back, when the foot is in the stirrup ready to ride away from all our sins at once. Thus we have long purposed to serve God, and every man thinketh that he should be served, but we cannot accord of the time when to begin: one saith, When I am rich; another saith, When I am free; another saith, When I am settled; another saith, When I am old, then my pleasure will leave me, and I shall be fitter to fast and pray, and sequester myself, but now I shall be mocked if I be not like others. Thus, like bad borrowers, when our day is past already, we crave a longer, and a longer, and yet a longer, till we be arrested with death; so the prince of creatures dieth before he considered why he lived; for as no discipline is used where Christ's discipline is neglected, so no time is observed where God's time is omitted.

It is an old saying, Repentance is never too late; but it is a true saying, Repentance is never too soon. Therefore, we are commanded to run that we may obtain, 1 Cor. ix. 24, which is the swiftest pace of man. The cherubims were pourtrayed with wings before the place where the Israelites prayed, Exod. xxv. 20, to shew how quickly they went about the Lord's business. The hound which runs but for the hare, girds forth so soon as he sees the hare start; the hawk which flieth but for the partridge, taketh her flight so soon as she spieth the partridge spring; so we should follow the word so soon as it speaketh, and come to our Master so soon as he calleth. For God requiring the first-born for his offering, and the first-fruits for his service, requireth the first labours of his servants, and, as I may say, the maidenhead of every man. Therefore, so soon as man was created, a law was given him, Gen. ii. 15, 16, to shew that he should live under obedience from the day that he is born. So, so soon as he is born, he is baptized in the name of God, to shew that when we cannot run to Christ, we should creep unto him, and serve him as we can in youth and age; so soon as he beginneth to pray, he saith, 'Thy name be hallowed, thy kingdom come, thy will be done,' before he asks his daily bread, to shew that we should seek the will of God, before the food which we live by, much more before the sins and pleasures which we perish by. So soon as the Lord distributed the talents, he enjoined his servants to use them. Who is so young which hath not received some talent or other? therefore youth cannot excuse him, because the talent requires to be asked of every one which hath it. So soon as God had created

the man and the woman, he commanded them to increase and multiply; shall we increase and multiply in the flesh, before we increase and multiply in the spirit? The first thing which God did after he had created heaven and earth, he did separate light from darkness, Gen. i. 4, to shew us how we should separate good from evil, before our good become evil. The first lesson that John taught was, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,' Mat. iii. 2. The first lesson that the disciples taught was 'Repent,' too, 'for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,' Acts iii. 19. And the first lesson that Christ taught was, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,' Mat. iv. 17, to teach us what we should do first. *Repent* was the first lesson to young and old. For what can we owe God to-morrow which we are not indebted to-day? Therefore David prayed, 'Teach me, O Lord, to number my days,' Ps. xc. 12; not my years, nor my months, nor my weeks, but my days; shewing that we shall answer for days as well as years, for to-day as well as to-morrow; and for our youth as straitly as our age, which made him cry, 'Remember not the sins of my youth,' which he would not have spoken if God did not mark the sins of youth as well as age. Therefore he calleth children unto him, as Solomon doth, and saith, that he will teach them the fear of the Lord. For should children honour their father, and not honour God? It was a sweet comfort[1] when the children went before Christ to his temple, and sang their hosanna to make their fathers ashamed, which did not know the Messias when he came, when their little children knew him. It is written, that when Christ heard a young man answer that he had kept the commandments from his youth, Christ began to love him; which shews how Christ loveth these timely beginnings, when we make him our nurse and draw our first milk from his breasts. There is not one confession for old men and another for young men: the old man saith not, I *did* believe in God; the young man saith not, I *will* believe in God; but both say, I *do* believe in God, for he which is called I AM, Exod. iii., loveth *I am*, and careth not for *I was*, nor *I will be*. When Christ asked Peter, 'Lovest thou me?' he looked that Peter should answer him, 'Yea, Lord, I love thee,' and not drive him off, as Felix did Paul, I will hear thee, I will love thee, when I have a convenient time. For he which will not come when God calls, whatsoever he say, it is impossible that he should resolve to come hereafter; for he which is evil, how should he resolve to be good? Therefore now or never, now and ever, the tree which buddeth not in the spring is dead all

[1] Qu. 'concert'?—Ed.

the year. When a married man is first married, he may use the matter so to win his wife unto him, or estrange her heart for ever. When a pastor cometh first to a place, with a small matter he may make the simple people like him, or dislike him, so long as he stayeth; when the heir comes to his lands, lightly all his tenants begin to speak well of him, or evil of him; when a prince cometh to the crown, by the laws which he maketh first, the people guess how he will rule ever after, and either dispose their hearts to love him, or wish his death.

Therefore the sage and beaten counsellors advised Rehoboam when he began to reign, 'Shew thyself loving to the people this day, and they will be thy servants for ever,' 2 Chron. x., as though all the days after could not do so much as the first. Such a victory it is to begin well, as our proverb saith, He which hath begun well, is half his way; especially it is good for a man to begin his repentance before he learn to be evil; for herein our minds do follow our bodies. If our children be deformed in their youth, we never look to see them well favoured; so if the mind be planted in sin, seldom any goodness buddeth out of that stock. For virtue must have a time to grow, the seed is sown in youth, which cometh up in age.

And if we can say of others, when we see a graceless boy, Thou wilt prove a wagstring if thou live to be older; why should we, if we begin as ill as he, think that we shall be better and better, which judge that he will be worse and worse? As the arrow is directed at the first, so it flieth all the way, over or under, or beside, but it never findeth the mark, unless it be levelled right in the hand; so they which make an evil beginning, for-speak themselves at the first, and wander out all their race, because when they should have levelled their life, they took their aim amiss. Therefore happy are they which have their arrow in their hand, and day before them, for they need not wish to be young again. Now kill the serpent in the egg, for when he is a serpent he will kill thee; if thou canst not overcome sin in the infancy, before the root fasten, and the fence be made about it, how wilt thou struggle with the lion, when he useth his paws, and sin is become like an old man, so tough and froward, that he will not hear? As hard as it is to reclaim one of these old sinners, or grand papists, which are incorporate into popery, and as poison is settled in a serpent, so hard it will be to reclaim thee, when thou wilt begin to say, It hath been my custom, and I cannot leave it.

Try thy strength but with one of thy sins, and see what shifts, what excuses, what delays it will find, and how it will importune

thee to let it alone, as the devil tormented the child before he went out; if thou canst not discharge one vice that thou hast accustomed thyself unto, when all thy vices are become customs, how wilt thou wrestle with them?

Therefore we bend the tree while it is a twig, and break the horse while he is a colt, and teach the dog while he is a whelp, and tame the eagle while he is young.

Youth is like the day to do all our works in. For when the night of age cometh, then every man saith, I might have been learned, I might have been a teacher, I might have been like him, or him, but the harvest was past before I began to sow, and winter is come, now my fruit should ripe. Thus every man that is old saith, he cannot do that which he thought to do, and crieth with Solomon, Catechise the child in his youth, and he will remember it when he is old; so corrupt him in his youth, and he will remember that too. This Nebuchadnezzar perceived, and therefore he chose the towardliest children of the Israelites to train them up in idolatry, Dan. i., like the popish seminaries, that they might be his instruments another day. If he had let them alone till they had learned the truth first, he thought that they would not take his way; therefore he took them before they had any religion, to frame them to his religion. If idolaters and papists be so cunning in their generation, to poison their children betime, lest they should prove Christians after, what care appertaineth to Christians to season their children in their spring, like the virtuous lady which John commendeth, lest they prove papists, and traitors, and reprobates, when they look for comfort of them! There was nothing which made Rehoboam to choose such young counsellors, when he began to reign, but because they were his companions before, therefore they became his counsellors after. This is the preferment of our sins, if they have been our companions in youth, in age they will look to be counsellors and masters too. Therefore, the best season to seek God, is to seek him early, before the floods of wrath arise, and the heap of sins stand up like a rampired wall between God and us. 'They which seek me early shall find me,' saith Wisdom, in the eighth of Proverbs; but to them which defer, she saith, 'they shall seek me, but they shall not find me,' Prov. i., 'because they did not choose the fear of the Lord.' That is, when good and evil were set before them, they did prefer evil before good, as a man chooseth that which he liketh. Therefore, 'when they seek me,' saith God, 'they shall not find me.' How do ye say then that ye will seek God, when God himself saith that ye

shall not find him? Therefore, in the fourth of Proverbs, and the seventh verse, Wisdom is called 'the beginning;' to teach us to seek wisdom in the beginning; for, saith Christ, 'If ye seek the kingdom of heaven first, all the rest shall be cast upon you,' Mat. vi. 33. He saith not, If you seek the world first, heaven shall be cast upon you; but if you seek heaven first, worldly things shall be cast upon you. He which doth believe this, would first seek the kingdom of heaven, for that which followeth, that all the rest might be cast upon him; as when Solomon desired wisdom before honour, God gave him wisdom and honour too, because he sought the best first.

There was a pool in Jewry where the sick and leprous lay, John v. 2; for at one time of the day the angel came and stirred the water, and then he which stepped in first was healed of his disease. He which stepped in first was healed, saith John; none but he which stepped in first; so he which taketh time is sure, but he which foresloweth time oftener faileth than speedeth. For when golden opportunity is past, no time will fit for her. If Elias would be served before the widow, when she had but a little cruse of oil, which was not enough to serve herself, will God be served after Elias? Will God be served after thee? nay, after the flesh, and after the devil? Thou mayest read in Lev. xix. 13, that God would not have the labourer's hire stay in thy hands all night, but would have thee pay him before thou sleep. If God would not have the labourer's due stay in thy hands one night, how darest thou keep his due from him day and night? so many days and nights, weeks, and months, and years together? Where is the morning sacrifice which God requireth? Nay, where is the evening sacrifice which God requireth? The gloomy morning hath overcast the whole day. Dost thou think it enough if thou do not sit in the seat of the scorners, or if thou do not stand in the way of sinners? He which standeth stayeth not, he which sitteth taketh his ease, but he which walketh goeth his way. Yet he which walketh in the way of sinners, though he neither sit nor stand, is not of the blesssed number. But he which neither sitteth, nor standeth, nor walketh, is blessed, saith David, Ps. i. 1. Alas, then, why do we sit, if they which stand are accursed, and they which walk are not blessed? Christ saith, Mat. vi. 33, 'First seek the kingdom of God;' and we say, First let me bury my father, first let me bid my friends farewell, and so many things first. So long in burying our father, and bidding our friends farewell (that is, the riches, and honours, and pleasures of

this world), that there is no time left to seek the kingdom; but *follow me* is turned to *follow us;* Christ must follow our sins, and come after our pleasures, or else he shall not be served at all. When we were children, we deferred till we were men; when we are men, we defer till we be old men; when we are old men, we defer till death; in all our life we find no leisure to live well, but flit from sin to sin, from wicked thoughts to wicked speeches, from wicked speeches to wicked deeds, as the fly skippeth from scab to scab, until we be cast so far behind, that we have no courage to go forward, or else strayed so far out of the way, that we care not to seek it again. Therefore, I cannot say to you as Christ said, 'First seek the kingdom of heaven,' for then you should have sought it long ago; but now I must say with the apostle, 'Redeem the time,' and at last seek the kingdom of heaven. For it is to be feared, that as little flies, when many came together, plagued and destroyed the Egyptians; so short hours, but many, in sin and security, will steal away our whole life, and deceive our repentance, while we live like beasts longer than Nebuchadnezzar.

There be not many Lots, but many linger like Lot, loath to depart, until they see the fire burn. If the angel had not snatched him away, Lot had perished with Sodom for his delay. There be not five foolish virgins and five wise, but five for one knock when the door is shut. There be not many Simeons, but many as old as Simeon, which never yet embraced Christ in their hearts. They thought to repent before they were so old, yet now they doat for age, they are not old enough to repent yet. Nay, I answer, many masters of Israel, mayors, aldermen, sheriffs, justices, bailiffs, constables, gentlemen, know no more what it is to be born again, than Nicodemus which came by night; line after line, sermon after sermon, and the blackmoor like himself. All their terms are vacations, all their religion promises, and all their promises hypocrisies. Instead of catchising their children, as Solomon teacheth them, they catechise them to hunt and hawk, to ride and vaunt, to ruffle and swear, to game and dance, as they were catechised themselves, lest the child should prove better than his father, and then he is qualified like a gentleman. Is this to seek the kingdom of heaven first, or last, or not at all? Woe to the security, woe to the stubbornness, woe to the drowsiness of this age. The thief cometh at midnight, and we sleep till the dawning of the day; we let in Satan before we bid him avoid; we sell our birthright before it come to our hands; we seek for oil when our lamps should burn; this day passeth like yesterday, and to-morrow we shall spend like this day.

So he which should have the first fruits, can get no fruits, because we mar the ground before we sow it.

Consider this, ye which might have known a thousand things more than ye do, if ye had begun when Solomon taught you. God will not always knock at the door, Christ will not always cluck like a hen, John will not alway cry in the wilderness; but mercy is in the foreward, and judgment in the rearward. They which can say now, We have a prophet, shall say, We had a prophet, but we entertained him like the Gargesites; so God sent him away from us like Jonah to the Ninevites, when the Israelites despised him. Yet Wisdom crieth in the streets, Let every Joseph store up before the famine comes; for he which promiseth thee pardon when thou dost return, doth not promise that to-morrow thou shalt return. Repentance is a gift, and a gift must be taken when it is offered. The time past is gone, and thou canst not recall that to repent in; the time to come is uncertain, and thou canst not assure that to repent in; the present time is only thine, and thou mayest repent in that; but anon that will be gone too. Therefore, as Samuel began to serve God in his minority, as Timothy read the Scriptures in his childhood, and John grew in spirit as he ripened in years; so whether thou be old or young, thy repentance cannot come too soon, because thy sin is gone before. If thou lackest a spur to make thee run, see how every day runneth away with thy life. Youth cometh upon childhood, age cometh upon youth, death cometh upon age, with such a swift sail, that if all our minutes were spent in mortifying ourselves, yet our glass will be run out before we had purged half our corruptions. All these examples, and sentences, and proverbs, and reasons, do cry with Solomon, 'Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth.' This is the king's commendation or greeting to the college of youth. But how should young men remember God, when old men forget him? If Noah be drunk, who shall rebuke Ham? It is time to remember God in age, or else to forget him for ever. Therefore, as the Israelites gathered twice so much manna the day before the Sabbath, as they gathered any day before that, because they might not gather upon the Sabbath; so the grey head, which looketh every day for the last Sabbath, when he shall rest in the grave, should pray twice as much, hear twice as much, do twice as much, to prepare the sacrifice of his body and soul ready and acceptable unto God, because the night is at hand, when he cannot hear, nor pray, nor repent any more. It is said, the devil is very busy because his time is short, but an old man's is shorter. What haste should he make that must go further

than the moon, than the sun, in a year, or a month, or a week, which the saints were going all their life? Therefore, if youth had need of legs, age had need of wings to fly unto God. But as Christ said, 'The poor receive the gospel', though the rich be more bound; so we may say, the young men receive the gospel, though the old men have more cause.

The young men follow Christ, the young men hear the word, the young men sanctify themselves, the young men stand for the church, the young men bear the heat of this day; old Noah is drunk, old Lot is sleepy, old Samson hath lost his strength. Once the younger brother did steal the blessing from the elder, and now he hath got it again, as the malice of Esau shews, which persecutes him for it. I speak it to their shame, they that wear the furs and scarlets, as though they were all wisdom, and gravity, and holiness, even to the skirts, may say as Zedekiah said to Micaiah, 'When did the Spirit depart from me and go to thee?' when did zeal depart from us and go to you? They are so nouseled to the world, and acquainted with sin, that it is too late now for the word to speak unto them; they may look upon the signs of wisdom, and gravity, and holiness, when they see their long beards, and grey heads, and side gowns, and ask, Why is this bush hanged out, and no wine within? What marvel, then, if they be not reverenced, but mocked and pointed at, when Shem and Japhet had need to come again, and cover their nakedness? What a shame was it to the Israelites when Christ said by a Canaanite, 'I have not found so great faith in Israel'! So what a shame is it to the elders, that Christ may say again, I have not found so great faith, nor knowledge, nor zeal in masters, and fathers, and rulers, as in servants, and children, and apprentices; which made an old father of this city say, which now is with God, that if there were any good to be done in these days, it is the young men that must do it; for the old men are out of date, their courage stoops like their shoulders, their zeal is withered like their brows, their faith staggereth like their feet, and their religion is dead before them. Be assured of this, that ye are come to that time which yourselves set to repent; and yet, as though there were another age to repent after old age, you spend old age like youth, as if you were appointed to die in your sins. 'God hath chosen the weak things,' saith Paul, 1 Cor. i., so I may say, God hath chosen the young things to do his works; as if the Lord had spoken to you in his wrath, Fathers, I will provoke you by your children; masters, I will provoke you by your servants; as once he threatened to provoke the Jews by the Gentiles. Therefore, be of good cheer,

young Daniel, young Samuel, young Timothy; though our adversaries be as the Aramites, yet there be more with us than against us. Flesh and blood could not overcome flesh and blood; but if you be sanctified, it is the Spirit which hath sanctified you; for the devil would not go out unless a stronger than the devil hath entered the house; when you come to be rich and elder, like Demas, then take heed that ye do not embrace the world, as Demas did, and turn to that which ye condemn. The vine would not leave her grapes, nor the olive her fatness, nor the fig-tree her sweetness, to be a king, but the bramble did; he is not a vine, nor an olive, nor a fig-tree, but a bramble made for the fire, which leaveth his righteousness to become worse. He which is of the church will say with the church, 'I have washed my feet, how should I defile them again?' Let the dog turn to his vomit, and the swine to her wallowing; but hold thou on thy sacrifice, like Abraham, to the evening of thy life, and a full measure shall be measured unto thee, as thou hast measured thyself. Unto the which measure without measure, the Lord Jesus bring us!

# THE TRIAL OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

# THE TRIAL OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

*Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of all.*—Ps. XXXIV. 19.

THE sum of this verse is as if he should say, Let the righteous look for more troubles than other, and likewise let them hope for greater comforts than other; for when they are well, they shall be eclipsed again, to shew that their light was but borrowed; and when they are eclipsed, their light shall return, to shew their difference from them whom God hateth, which fall from plague to plague, as they run from sin to sin.

This verse hath three parts, for here the *righteous* are the agents, their condition *troubles*, and the Lord their *deliverer*. So many things fall out contrary unto our minds every day, that he which wanteth patience in this world, is like a man which standeth trembling in the field without his armour, because every one can strike him, and he can strike none. So the least push of pain, or loss, or disgrace, doth trouble that man more which hath not the skill to suffer, than twenty trials can move him which is armed with patience, like a golden shield in his hand, to break the stroke of every cross, and save the heart though the body suffer; for while the heart is whole, all is well. 'A sound spirit,' saith Solomon, 'will bear his infirmity, but a wounded spirit what can sustain?' Prov. xviii. 14. Therefore, as the lid is made to open and shut, to save the eye, so patience is set to keep the soul, and save the heart whole, to cheer the body again. Therefore if you mark, when you can go by an offence, and take a little wrong and suffer trouble quietly, you have a kind of peace and joy in your heart, as if you have gotten a victory, and the more your patience is, still the less your pain is. For as a light burden, borne at the arm's end, weigheth heavier by

much, than a burden of treble weight, if it be borne upon the shoulders, which are made to bear; so if a man set impatience to bear his cross, which is not fit to bear, it will grumble, and murmur, and start, and shrink, and let the burden fall upon his head, like a broken staff, which promiseth to help him over the water, and leaveth him in the ditch. But if you put it to patience, and set her to bear it, which is appointed to bear, she is like the hearty spies that came from Canaan, and said, 'It is nothing to overcome them,' Joshua ii. So patience saith, It is nothing to bear, it is nothing to fast, it is nothing to watch, it is nothing to labour, it is nothing to be envied, it is nothing to be backbited, it is nothing to be imprisoned. 'In all these things,' saith Paul, 'we are more than conquerors,' Rom. viii. 37. As though all these things came not to make us mourners, but to make us conquerors, nay, more than conquerors, because a conqueror conquereth his enemy but once, but we conquer these as often as Christ did the tempter. Thus all is in the manner of bearing, which maketh persecution seem joyful unto some, and irksome to others; which maketh poverty welcome to one, and bitter to another; which maketh him sing in his sickness, as if he were whole; and thee rave, and whine, and curse, as if thou wert not sick, but frantic. Therefore Christ's yoke is called an easy yoke, Mat. xi., because it is easy to some; that is, to them which have skill to bear it as Christ did bear it. By his infinite patience, he suffered infinite pains for infinite sins. Patience is like a privy coat upon his soul, that when the devil struck at him he was stricken himself. When death came to kill him, he was killed himself, and all their shot could not hurt him, because of his preservative which he had about him, like Samson's hair, which saved him from all his enemies, Judges xvi. 17. If the master carried patience about him for to guard him through these pikes of troubles, which stand like the fiery sword between us and paradise, Gen. iii., how can the servant escape them, unless he be armed as his master was? For what hath the poor man to bear his wants, what hath the bondman to bear his griefs, what hath the sick man to bear his pains, but to lay all upon the shoulders of patience, and say with Jeremiah, 'This is my sorrow, I will bear it,' Jer. x. 19. As the tree which Moses cast into the spring seasoned the bitterness of the waters, Exod. xv. 25, so patience cast into our troubles seasoneth the bitterness of the cross, and is as it were instead of an assistant unto every man, to overthrow and overcome his troubles, like the armour-bearer which helped Jonathan to vanquish his enemies, 1 Sam. xiv. She hath a device to draw such a skin over

our sores that shall make our poverty seem riches, our reproaches seem honour, our bondage seem liberty, our labour seem rest, our sorrow seem joy, our pain seem ease, our sickness seem health, and all that hurt us rejoice us, until we say with David, 'Thy judgments are pleasant,' shewing that God's justice is as pleasant to the patient as his mercies to others. Therefore what a peacemaker were this in the commonwealth, if the magistrate had patience to bear his envy, if the preacher had patience to bear his study, if the creditor had patience to bear his losses, if the bondman had patience to bear his service, if the husbandman had patience to bear his labour, if the sick man had patience to bear his pain, if the poor man had patience to bear his wants. For want whereof many think themselves in hell, and say that no man's pain is like their pain, no man's wants like their wants, no man's foes like their foes, no man's wrongs like their wrongs, when they can scarce tell where their pain holds them. Therefore, albeit few can brook of humility, and charity, and meekness, and thankfulness, and temperance, and those severe virtues which pull from pleasure; yet every man doth wish for patience, like a physician, to ease his grief by all means that they can. So they which are wicked, although they cannot see the goodness of other virtues, yet can see the goodness of patience, and perceive when they see a patient man and an impatient man both sick of one disease, yet both are not troubled alike, but that he which hath most patience hath most ease, and he which is most impatient is most tormented, like a fish which strives with the hook. Therefore even those which cannot suffer that they might have rest, yet sing the patient proverb, 'In sufferance is rest.' This is a lesson that I know you would gladly learn, even as Pharaoh longed to know his dream, Gen. xli. 15. Though ye care not for virtue, as the cruel judge cared not for charity, yet if you could gain such a bargain by any virtue, to ease you of your pains, it would make you look unto virtue as Pharaoh used Moses, but to remove the plagues, Exod. ix. 28.

This power God hath given to patience, the medicinable virtue, that it should be like an wholesome herb in the world, or a general physician for all persons and all diseases. Therefore when the angel had recorded all the troubles which should come in the latter days, at last he concluded, 'Here is the patience of saints,' Rev. xiii. 10, as though patience should bear all. Therefore so many scriptures go, like preachers, about the Bible, to exhort unto patience, like a beacon which is set up to call men together, shewing us that by 'patience we possess our souls,' Luke xxi. 19, as

though a man without patience had no rule of himself; that 'a man's wisdom is known by his patience,' Prov. ix., as though that he which is not patient cannot be wise; that 'by patience we receive the promises,' Heb. x., as though the promises did not belong unto us unless we have patience; that 'patience breedeth experience, and experience hope,' Rom. v., as though he which wanteth patience had no experience of God, to know the scope of his doings, nor any hope to comfort him about the life to come; besides many reasons more; that 'the afflictions of this world are not worthy of the joys that succeed them'; that 'all things' (even our afflictions) 'turn to the best if we love God,' Rom. viii.; that 'they are blessed which weep here, because they shall laugh hereafter,' Mat. v.; that 'if we suffer with Christ, we shall reign with Christ,' 2 Tim. ii.; that 'the Lord doth love those whom he chasteneth,' Prov. iii.; that 'by suffering we are made like the Son of God,' whose life was a persecution, as though the Holy Ghost, by often calling upon us, like the importunate woman, Luke xviii., would compel us to be patient, whether our flesh will or no.

Besides these honourable praises of patience, the prophets, evangelists, and apostles, have set a number of examples before our eyes, like banners, of such cures as have been healed by her, that, as the author to the Hebrews saith, chap. xi., 'By faith Abel offered a better sacrifice than Cain; by faith Enoch was translated before he saw death; by faith Noah prepared the ark, and was preserved from the flood; by faith Abraham was content to sacrifice his son, and yet believed that in his seed all the world should be blessed; by faith Sarah received strength to bring forth a child when she was stricken in years, and past the strength of the womb;' so I may say of patience, By patience Job did bear all the torments that the devil could heap upon him, Job i.; by patience Jacob put up a thousand wrongs from Laban and his children, and never complained in one and twenty years before he departed, Gen. xxix.–xxxi.; by patience Joseph forgave his brethren, when he might have put them to death, and gave them food when they feared revenge, Gen. xlv. 15; by patience Christ suffered banishment, and reproaches, and scourges, until he went to his death like a lamb to the slaughter.

Among the strange cures of patience, David may report of his experience what this plaster hath done for him; for, being a figure of Christ, he was always hedged about with the cross, which proved his patience like a touchstone every day. As Christ was contemned of his countrymen, so David was contemned of his brethren, 1 Sam. xxvi. 2; as Christ fled to Egypt, so David fled unto Gath; as Christ

received food of women, so David received food of Abigail, Luke viii. 2; as Herod persecuted Christ, so Saul persecuted David; and the wrath of the king brought many enemies with it, that when he was anointed, yet he could not reign; and when he reigned, yet his reign was but a warfare: the Philistines against him, the Ammonites against him, the Edomites against him, the Moabites against him, and Absalom (his own bowels) against him, for whom he cried, 'Would God I had died for thee!' This son, which was his darling, was his traitor, and sought his death that brought him to life, as though Saul had been risen from the grave again. In all these troubles Samuel shews what was this pilgrim's comfort, 'But David comforted himself in the Lord his God,' 1 Sam. xxx. 6, as though he had no comfort but in God alone. This was the stone upon which he leaned his head: Be patient, for 'many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of all.' When he did behold his trouble, like the host of the Aramites, 2 Kings vi. 16, he looked back unto God like Elisha, and spied one with him stronger than all against him. Therefore, respecting his afflictions he crieth, 'Many are the troubles of the righteous;' respecting the promise he singeth, 'The Lord delivereth them out of all.' Thus, by his own foot, David measureth the condition of the righteous, and saith, 'Many are the troubles of the righteous;' and then, by his own cure, he sheweth how they should be healed, saying, 'The Lord will deliver him out of all.' If ye mark, the Spirit hath directed David to those two things which make us take our troubles grievously: one, because we do not look for them before they come. Therefore, as Christ told Peter before he suffered, to strengthen him when he suffered, John xxi. 18; so the Holy Ghost doth run upon the cross to keep us in expectation of troubles, that we might prepare faith, and patience, and constancy for them, as Noah prepared an ark for the flood.

The second thing which makes us to start so at the cross is, because we are like the prophet's servant, which did see his foes, but not his friends, 2 Kings vi.; so we see our sore, but not our salve. Comfort seems afar off, like Abraham in the heavens, Luke xvi., as though it would never come so low. Therefore we go about to deliver ourselves, as it is said, Ps. ii., 'Let us break his bands,' as though we could deliver ourselves. But 'hold your peace,' saith Moses, 'the Lord shall fight for you,' Exod. xiv. 14. So David comes in like a pacifier, and saith, 'Vex not yourselves, for the Lord will deliver you.' Bear both these sentences in mind, that you must go through a sea of troubles, and that then you shall come to

the haven of rest, and no affliction shall take you before you be armed for it, and in every trouble you shall know where to have your remedy: 'Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of all.' Here be the two hands of God, like a wound and a plaster; one casteth down, and the other raiseth up. It is good for a man to know his troubles before they come, because afflictions are lightened in the expectation; therefore, God saith of Paul, Acts ix. 16, 'I will shew him how many things he shall suffer for me.' God dealeth plainly, and tells us the worst first; what we shall trust to, as Christ told his disciples at the first, 'If ye will be my disciples, ye must take up the cross,' Mat. xvi. 24; cold entertainment, to break their fast with the rod! Other feast makers, saith Christ, broach the best wine first, but Christ keepeth the best till the last, John ii. 10. This is the manner of God's proceedings, to send good after evil, as he made light after darkness, Gen. i. 3; to turn justice into mercy, as he turned water into wine, John ii.; for as the beasts must be killed before they could be sacrificed, so men must be killed before they can be sacrificed; that is, the knife of correction must prune and dress them, and lop off their rotten twigs before they can bring forth fruit. These are the cords which bind the ram unto the altar, lest when he is brought thither he should run from thence again; this is the chariot which carrieth our thoughts to heaven, as it did Nebuchadnezzar's, and our assumption before our assumption. This is the hammer which squareth the rough stones till they be plain, and smooth, and fit for the temple; this is the first messenger which is sent to compel them to the banquet, which will not come when they are invited. Because we are naturally given to love the world more than is good for us, therefore God hath set an edge of bitterness upon us to make us loathe it, like a nurse which layeth mustard upon her breasts to wean the child from the dug; so, 'many are the troubles of the righteous,' to wean us from the dug of the world. The cross is one of our schoolmasters in this life, and the best wisdom is dearest bought. Prosperity seeketh for nothing, but necessity seeketh, and studieth, and laboureth, and prayeth for her wants. As the rod maketh the scholar to ply his book, so all our knowledge is beaten into us; some learn their goodness of poverty, some of sickness, some of troubles. Adversity is the fit time to learn the justice, mercy, power, and providence of God; a fit time to learn the patience, wisdom, faith, and obedience of man; a fit time to learn the subtilty, frailty, and misery of this world. All this thou buyest for troubles; yet they are but troubles, not plagues, nor curses, nor

torments, but like the travails of a woman; when the birth is ripe she is delivered, and straight she forgetteth all her pains, for joy that a man-child is born into the world; so the servants of God travail but till the fruits be ripe. When the new man is born, their travails are ended, and they forget all their troubles, because one is born into the world like the Son of God. This is the difference between the afflictions of the righteous and the ungodly.

When God doth visit the wicked, his punishments are called plagues, and curses, and destructions; the plagues of Egypt, the curse of Cain, the destruction of Sodom. But when he doth visit the righteous, his punishments are called corrections, and chastisements, and rods, which proceed from a Father, not to destroy us, but to try us, and purge us, and instruct us; therefore, when we are afflicted, one saith, That God letteth us blood to save our lives, for our lives are rank, and must be lopped. And as Jacob was blessed and halted both at one time, so a man may be blessed and afflicted both together. Afflictions do not hinder our happiness, but our happiness cometh by affliction, as Jacob's blessing came with halting, Gen. xxxii., and as peace is procured by war. Therefore, 'blessed are ye,' saith Christ, 'when men persecute you,' Mat. v.; as though they were blessed even while they were persecuted. Therefore, this must not dismay us, that the Scripture saith, 'many are the troubles of the righteous,' but rather rejoice us, because we bear the marks of the righteous. Daniel complaineth not of his sickness, but of his sins. Who shall fight the Lord's battles but the Lord's servants? Therefore, when David spake of many troubles, he pointed to the righteous, as if he should say, This is your share; the rod is made for the child. Christ called the cross his cup, Mat. xx. The servant is beloved that drinks of his master's cup; therefore, Christ teacheth it to the righteous, and bids none but his disciples take the cross, Mat. xi. Every man which hath his heaven here, doth labour and sweat for his living, Gen. iii.; and shall not they which have their hell here, suffer more than they which have their heaven here? All men are subject to dangers, and losses, and sicknesses, but 'all that believe in Christ,' saith Paul, 'shall suffer persecutions,' 2 Tim. iii.; that is, more than dangers, or losses, or sicknesses which the wicked suffer; for the world will not persecute her children, but she will persecute God's children: therefore, this church is called the militant church, because it is always in warfare. Therefore the gospel is called the word of the cross, as though it came to cross us; therefore Paul, describing the way to heaven, draweth by this line, 'by many tribulations,' Acts xiv. 22.

The cross way is the way to heaven, and the righteous walk in it; therefore, the children of God are not only called labourers, Mat. xxi., to shew what they should do for God, but they are called soldiers, 2 Tim. ii. 3, to shew what they should suffer for God. 'The servant is not above his master,' John xv. 20; but if Christ should suffer and we should rest, the servant were above his master. The prophecy must be fulfilled, 'I will put enmity between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent,' Gen. iii.; but if there be no war between the children of God and the children of the world, the prophecy is not fulfilled. Therefore Esau and Jacob had no sooner life but they began to struggle one with another before they came out of their mother's womb, Gen. xxv. 22; therefore Abraham was banished so soon as he received the promise; therefore Abel was envied of his brother so soon as he was accepted of God, Gen. iv. 5. The righteous man was alway, like Lot among the Sodomites, and like Samson among the Philistines, set a-work by his enemies. As Christ was no sooner born but Herod sought his life, Mat. ii., so the new man is no sooner born of the Spirit but the serpent is ready to devour him, his brethren to banish him, and hell to swallow him. In all the world he hath no friend but he which made the world. This is the state of the church militant; she is like the ark floating upon the waters, like a lily growing among thorns, like the bush which burned with fire, and was not consumed, Exod. iii. 2. So the city of God is always besieged, but never ruined. Christians and persecutions close together like Christ and his cross. As Christ was made to bear his own cross, Luke xxiii. 33, John xix. 17, so they are made to hold their cheeks to the nippers, their faces to be buffeted, their backs to be scourged, their eyes to be pulled out. Their peace is persecution, their rest labour, their riches poverty, their glory reproaches, their liberty imprisonment. Although they be the sons of God, the brethren of Christ, the only heirs of heaven, yet because they suffer their hell here, they must be content to be subject to their enemies, to be abjects to their kinsmen, to be hated of most, to be contemned of all, to be persecuted over the earth, a very haven and receptacle of troubles, Ps. lxix. 7, 8, 17. Yet, as Christ was the Son of God, though his life was nothing but persecution, so the righteous are the sons of God for all these troubles. This is like a bait in their journey, to think as the Samaritan told his host, 'If thou spend any more, I will recompense thee when I come,' Luke x. 35; so Christ will mend their wages when he cometh. Why should not God try his friends, as well as we try our friends? The same afflictions, saith Peter, are

accomplished in others, nay, greater afflictions are borne of others, which would make us despair like Cain. Christ was consecrated by afflictions; therefore we cannot be consecrated without afflictions; who would not go to heaven with Elijah, though it were in a whirlwind? If our troubles be light and few, it is because we are weak and tender; therefore God doth respect our feebleness, and layeth no more upon us, because we are not able to bear more, 1 Cor. x. 13. It is not a sign that we are righteous because our troubles are few; but because our troubles are few, it is rather a sign that we are not righteous, because 'many are the troubles of the righteous.' For they must be made examples of patience, they must suffer their hell here, they must be squared for the temple; therefore they must have many strokes to make them fit. God is not like a wasp, which, when she hath stung once, cannot sting again; but there is a generation of crosses and a plurality of troubles. When David spake of troubles, he spake of troops, and heaps, and stars, and sands; and therefore he saith *many*, as though he were fain to lay them down in the gross sum, not reckon them. By 'many tribulations,' saith Paul, Acts xiv., but how many he could not number; for, except our sins, there is not such plenty of any thing in the world as there is of troubles which come from sin. As one heavy messenger came to Job after another, chap. i. 14–16, so now since we are not in paradise, but in the wilderness, we must look for one trouble after another. Therefore afflictions are called waters, because as one wave falleth upon another, so one trouble falleth upon another, Ps. xlii. 7–9.

As a bear came to David after a lion, and a giant after a bear, 1 Sam. xvii. 34, and a king after a giant, and Philistines after the king, so when they have fought with poverty, they shall fight with envy; when they have fought with envy, they shall fight with infamy; when they have fought with infamy, they shall fight with sickness, like a labourer which is never out of work. Thus you see the righteous in troubles, like the Israelites in exile, Exod. iii. 10. Now the Lord cometh like Moses to deliver them. Adversity seeketh out the promise, the promise seeketh out faith, faith seeketh out prayer; then God heareth, and mercy answereth. All this while Christ seemeth to sleep, as he did in the ship; now he rebukes the winds and waves, Mat. viii. 26, and troubles fly before him like a troop of wolves before the shepherd. As he asked the adulteress Where are thy accusers? and she said, They are gone; so he may ask his patients, Where are your troubles? and they may say, They are gone. The sun rose, and the mists vanished; yet, saith

David, God is good to all that are pure in heart; that is, he remembereth them while he afflicteth them, and is preparing an issue while the cross prepareth them. When Christ heard them say, 'He whom thou lovest is sick,' he answered, 'This sickness is not unto death,' John xi. 3. So when it may be said, He whom God loveth is sick, then it may be said, This sickness is not unto death; and though it be to the first death, yet not to the second. Who would think when Jonah was in the sea, Jonah iii., that he would preach at Nineveh? Who would think when Nebuchadnezzar was in the forest, Dan. iv., that he should reign again in Babel? Who would think when Joseph was banished of his brethren, that his brethren should seek unto him like his servants? Who would think when Job scraped his sores upon the dunghill, all his houses were burned, all his cattle stolen, and all his children dead, that he should be richer than ever he was? These are the acts of mercy which make the righteous sing, 'The Lord hath triumphed valiantly,' Exod. xv. 21. This is the privilege of the righteous. As God saith, 'Ye sons of Jacob are not consumed,' Mal. iii. 6; so they answer again, 'We are not consumed.' Therefore, Paul saith, 'We are in distress, but we are not forsaken,' 2 Cor. iv. 9; as Christ rose out of the grave, Luke xxiv. 6, so we shall rise out of trouble; and when the gold is fined, the fire shall hold it no longer. When Jesus was in banishment with Mary and Joseph, at last the angel came and said, 'They are dead which sought the child's life,' Mat. ii. 20; so when the days of our banishment, and scarcity, and bondage, and sickness are ended, at last tidings shall come that our troubles are dead, and the righteous shall look up like Moses when he was past the sea, and see all their enemies, all their troubles drowned behind them; then the heart shall dance like Miriam, and sing the song which sounded before Moses, 'The Lord, the Lord is strong, merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, but abundant in goodness and truth,' Exod. xxx. 15, 20, 34. And if David had stayed at troubles, and spoken of nothing but rods, the wicked might say, as they do in Ps. cxv., 'Where is their God?' and the righteous might complain with David, 'I have cleansed my heart in vain,' Ps. lxxiii. 13; but as the waters of the sea flow and ebb again, so the waters of affliction flow and ebb again; one casteth Moses into the water, and another draweth him out of the water. There lieth Lazarus at the gate, there lieth Joseph in prison, there lies Jeremiah in the dungeon, there lies Job in the ashes, there lies Jacob in the fields, there lies David in the wilderness, there lies Abraham in exile, there lies Daniel among the lions, there lie the children in the fur-

nace; at last comes the year of jubilee, and all the prisoners of the Lord are set at liberty; therefore they are called the 'prisoners of hope,' Zech. ix. 12, because they may hope to be delivered, &c. Therefore God translateth his cross from the head to the heart, from the heart to the foot, from poverty to sickness, from sickness to labour; that wheresoever he placeth it, we might have patience, knowing that he can remove it as he placeth it.

Then are fulfilled all these sweet scriptures: 'The Lord retaineth not his wrath for ever, because mercy pleaseth him,' Micah vii. 18; 'After two days he will revive us, and the third day he will raise us up,' Hosea vi. 2; 'Surely there is an end, and thy hope shall not be cut off,' Prov. xxiii. 18; 'Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy will come in the morning,' Ps. xxx. 5. He which hath overcome death, and Satan, and the world, can easily overcome all the troubles in the world. Rather than Elijah shall starve, the ravens shall feed him, 1 Kings xvii. 6; rather than Jonah shall drown, the fish shall save him, Jonah i.; as when the glutton did not pity, the dogs took compassion, Luke xvi. Until David saith, 'The Lord will deliver,' the righteous and the wicked go together, but now they part; one is taken, and the other is refused; one is delivered, the other is left in prison. As Abraham came not to deliver the Sodomites, but to deliver his brethren, Gen. xiv. 16, so Christ came not to deliver his enemies, but to deliver his servants; not to deliver them from troubles, but to deliver them out of troubles; that they may say as well, 'The Lord hath taken,' as 'The Lord hath given,' Job i. 21. As David gave charge to his soldiers, that they should not kill Absalom his son, though he sent them against Absalom to stay his rebellion, 2 Sam. xviii. 5, so God forbids his crosses to destroy his children, though he send them against his children to purge their corruptions. As the angel passed by the houses of the Israelites, when he saw the blood of the lamb upon their doors, Exod. xii. 13, so God hath his marks, whereby he knoweth whom he should deliver out of trouble, and whom he shall leave in trouble. To one he saith, Take my cross; to another he saith, Be thou healed; to another he saith, Stay till thy time cometh. Every hard word may be spoken to the godly, as well as to the wicked, but that deadly word, 'Depart into everlasting fire,' Mat. xxv. Although they seem to depart here, yet then it shall be said, 'Come,' and not 'Depart.' As John after the voice of thunder heard the voice of harpers, Rev. xiv. 2; so when they have been beaten, they shall be cherished. Therefore the trials of the righteous, though they be called many troubles, yet they are not called everlasting troubles.

As David saith here, 'Many are the troubles of the righteous,' so in Ps. xxxii. 10, he saith, 'Many are the sorrows of the righteous;' but it followeth, 'the Lord will deliver them out of all.' Nay, saith Solomon, 'when the righteous escape out of trouble, the wicked shall come in his stead,' Prov. xi. 8; that is, the troubles of the righteous shall shift to the ungodly, as the leprosy of Naaman went to Gehazi, 2 Kings v. 27. And therefore the wicked are called the ransom of the just, Prov. xxi. 18, because they lie in bail for them. As one bird chirpeth to another, so one plague shall whistle to another, Exod. viii., ix., and say, Come and help me to torment this sinner (for one plague will not serve the Egyptians), until he be so loaden with torments, that he cry like Cain, Gen. iv., 'My punishment is greater than I can bear.' The righteous never said, that their troubles were more, or greater, or longer than they could bear, for God hath promised he will not lay more upon them than they are able to bear, 1 Cor. x. 13; but when they begin to sink, like Peter upon the sea, then the hand is ready to catch them, and straight God maketh an issue for their troubles. As the viper leapt upon Paul, and leapt off again, Acts xxviii.; so troubles leap upon the righteous, and leap off again; as though they had mistaken the party, and rapped at the wrong door. Therefore, 'Mark the upright man,' saith David, 'and behold the just, for the end of that man is peace,' Ps. xxxvii. 37. Though his beginning be trouble, yet his end is peace: 'He will not suffer the righteous to fall for ever.' He saith not, that he will not suffer him to fall, but that he shall not fall *for ever;* that is, at last his shackle falleth from him, the net breaks, the prison openeth, and he goes forth, like Lazarus out of his grave, to shew what wonderful things the Lord hath done for him. So Paul, after he had spoken of his troubles (as though he thought upon this sentence of David), repeateth the same of himself, saying, 'But the Lord delivered me out of all,' 2 Tim. ii. Therefore one calleth affliction the trance of the righteous, because they seem dead for a while; but they wake again: therefore they challenge their enemies, and say, 'Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; for though I fall, yet I shall rise,' Micah vii. 18.

This should content the righteous, to be delivered at last; as David quieted himself, saying, Ps. xli. 11, 'By this I know the Lord favoureth me, because mine enemies do not triumph over me;' not because I have no enemies, or because I have no troubles which would overcome me. Therefore when he wrote down *many troubles,* he blotted it (as it were) with his pen again, as a merchant razeth his book when the debt is discharged; and instead of

*many troubles*, he putteth in, *the Lord delivereth.* Because he forgiveth all sins, he is said to deliver from all troubles; to shew that we have need of no Saviour, no helper, no comforter, but him.

The lawyer can deliver his client but from strife; the physician can deliver his patient but from sickness; the master can deliver his servant but from bondage; but 'The Lord,' saith David, 'delivereth out of all.' As when Moses came to deliver the Israelites, he would not leave an hoof behind him; so when the Lord cometh to deliver the righteous, he will not leave a trouble behind him. But even as they pray in Ps. xxv., 'Deliver Israel, O Lord, out of all his troubles;' so he will answer them, 'Be thou delivered out of all thy troubles;' that is, this, and this, and this (that trouble that thou thinkest intolerable, that trouble which thou thinkest incurable); the Almighty hath might against all. When Job is tried, not a sore shall stick upon him. Therefore, as Elisha feared not when he saw as many angels as enemies, 2 Kings vi.; so, when you see as many mercies as troubles, let the comfort satisfy you, which satisfied Paul, 'Fear not; for I am with thee,' Acts xxvii. 24, thy pardon is coming; like the angel which stayed the sword over Isaac's head, Gen. xxii. Read on but a little further, and thou shalt hear the voice which proclaimed war proclaim peace; many troubles in the beginning of the verse, and no troubles in the end. What physician hath been here? The Lord, saith David. 'The Lord was in this place,' saith Jacob, 'and I knew it not,' Gen. xxviii. 16; so the Lord is in affliction, and men know it not. He which saith, I put away thine iniquities, Isa. xliii. 25, must say, I put away thine infirmities. For there is no Saviour but one; which saith to death, 'I will be thy death.' As the woman was sick until Christ came, Mat. ix. 19; so until the Lord come, there is nothing but trouble. Many troubles of the righteous, but one deliverer of the righteous; many terrors, but one comforter. Troubles come in an hundred ways, like water through a grate; but mercy entereth always at one door, like a pardon which cometh only from the prince. Therefore, saith God, 'In me is thy help,' Hosea xiii. 9. 'I create comfort,' Isa. lxv. Mark that he calleth himself a Creator of comfort; that is, as there is but one Creator, so there is but one comforter; and as he created all things of nothing, so he createth comfort of nothing; that is, when all comfort is worn out, and no seed of joy left to raise up comfort again, then he bringeth comfort out of sorrow, as he brought water out of the rock, Exod. xvii. 6, 8, 14; that we may say, 'The finger of the Lord hath done this.'

This is the anchor of the righteous; as he looks upon his troubles, the promise cometh in like a messenger from Christ (while he is praying and weeping), and saith, 'The Lord will deliver thee out of all.' Then he resolveth, like Nehemiah, and saith, 'Shall such a man as I fly?' Neh. vi. 11. Shall such a man as I recant? If I be faint in the day of adversity, Solomon saith, My strength is small, Prov. xxiv. 10; as if he should say, I was never strong, but did counterfeit like Demas. If I want comfort in trouble, Solomon saith, 'A good conscience is a continual feast,' Prov. xv. 15. As if he should say, that I have not a good conscience, if I have not comfort in the cross. Therefore I will wait the Lord's leisure, because Isaiah saith, 'Faith maketh no haste.' I will not break his bands, because then I am like the heathen, Ps. ii. I will not flatter the judge, because Solomon saith it is in vain, Prov. xxix. 26. I will not betray the cause, because God hath appointed it to try me. I will not offend my brethren, because Paul had rather die than do so, 1 Cor. viii. 10. I will not charge my conscience, because it can vex me more than their bands. I will not turn from my profession, because I learned it of God, and vowed to leave all for it in the day that I was baptised a Christian. Though my friends tempt me, like Job's wife; though my flesh flatter me, like Eve; though my persecutors would bribe me, like Balak; though they which suffer with me should revolt for fear; yet I will be as Joshua, which stood alone, Joshua xxiv. 15; and as Elkanah was instead of children to Hannah, 1 Sam. i.; so Christ shall be, instead of comfort, instead of wealth, and health, and liberty to me. For many were the troubles of Joseph, and the Lord delivered him out of all; many were the troubles of Abraham, and the Lord delivered him out of all; many were the troubles of David, and the Lord delivered him out of all; many were the troubles of Job, and the Lord delivered him out of all: therefore he can deliver me out of all. But if he do not, saith Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, yet we will not do evil to escape danger, because Christ hath suffered more for us. Therefore, 'If I perish, I perish,' saith Esther, chap. iv. 16. She was content that her life should perish; but if my purse suffer, my money doth but perish; if my body be imprisoned, my pleasures do but perish; and who can tell when he hath suffered that which is appointed? Therefore God saith, Ps. lxxv., 'When I see convenient time, I will execute judgment.' Not when thou dost think it convenient time, but when he doth think it a convenient time. Therefore, saith David to the Lord, Ps. xxv. 5, 'In thee do I trust all the day;' that

is, if he come not in the morning, he will come at noon; if he come not at noon, he will come at night; at one hour of the day he will deliver me; and then as the calm was greater after the tempest than it was before, Mat. viii. 26, so my joy shall be sweeter after tears than it was before; the remembrance of Babylon will make us sing more joyful in Zion, Ps. cxxxvii.

Thus Moses describeth the journey of the righteous, as if they should go through the sea and wilderness, as the Israelites went to Canaan, Exod. xiii. 17. Look not for ease nor pleasure in your way, but for beasts, and serpents, and thieves; until you be past the wilderness, all is strait, and dark, and fearful; but as soon as you are through the narrow gate, all is large, and goodly and pleasant, as if you were in paradise. Seeing then your kingdom is not here, look not for a golden life in an iron world; but remember that Lazarus doth not mourn in heaven, though he suffered pains upon earth, Luke xvi.; but the glutton mourneth in hell, that stayed not for the pleasures of heaven. To which pleasures the Lord Jesus bring us, when this cloud of trouble is blown over us! Amen.

# THE CHRISTIAN'S PRACTICE.

# THE CHRISTIAN'S PRACTICE.

*Be ye changed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is the good will of God, acceptable and perfect.*—ROM. XII. 2.

WHEN Christ sent forth his disciples, he said unto them, 'Go preach and baptize,' Mat. xxviii. 19, joining these two together, preaching and baptizing. This being the occasion of our exercise, because I am to speak of baptism, which is the sacrament of regeneration, I could not choose a fitter scripture than that which I handled last, which speaks of the renewing of our minds; for when minds are renewed, then the vow which we made in baptism is performed.

When Paul had forbidden the Romans to fashion themselves unto the world, he shewed them another fashion, which he calls the 'renewing of the mind.' As the eagle reneweth her youth, Ps. ciii. 5, so men must renew their minds. This fashion is called the wedding garment, Mat. xxii. 12, which every man must wear that comes to the banquet of the king. As when men have gone over one fashion after another, at last they come to the old fashion; so here Paul calls them to the old fashion again, which was used in Adam's time, that is, the image and fashion wherein they were created, Gen. i. 26. Now the reason followeth.

That they may *prove what the will of God is;* as if he should say, This shall be the fruit of your regeneration: when your minds are renewed, you shall know many things which are hid from you; you shall be able to judge doctrines, *who* preach truth, and *who* preach error; and you shall understand the will of God, what he would have you do, and what he would have you fly, as if you were in his bosom. As new wine will not abide but in new vessels, Mat. ix. 17, so this new knowledge will not abide but in new minds. The mind

renewed knoweth God; so that this scripture may be called the path to knowledge, or the way to sound the mind of God, which is a secret that every man longs to know, but the most turn a wrong leaf to find it; as Paul saith of Peter, Gal. ii. 14, he looks a wrong way to the gospel. When the serpent taught knowledge, Gen. iii. 3, he said, If ye eat the forbidden fruit, 'your eyes shall be opened, and you shall know good and evil;' but Paul saith, If ye will not eat the forbidden fruit, your eyes shall be opened, and you shall know good and evil. This is one reason why Paul would have them renew their minds, that they might know the will of God. Why, doth not the word of God teach us the will of God? Yes, but no man doth understand this word, but he which hath a new mind; because, as the sun is not discerned by any light but by his own light, so no spirit can interpret the Scripture but the same Spirit which wrote it, which is called the Holy Spirit, because it is holy, and because it makes holy. Sin was the first veil which obscured man's understanding, Gen. iii. 7, and till the cause of this eclipse be taken away, the apostle saith, that we shall 'see but in part,' 1 Cor. xiii. 9; that is, as the sun may be seen in his eclipse, but he seems liker to darkness than to light, so understanding may be seen in the wicked, but is liker ignorance than knowledge; therefore Paul makes knowledge one of the fruits which bud out of righteousness.

They which have renewed their minds, saith he, shall prove what the will of God is; that is, they shall try all that they do, hear, and learn by all that they see, until that they track out the will and meaning of God. As the water engendereth ice, and the ice again engendereth water, so knowledge begets righteousness, and righteousness again begetteth knoweldge, according to that in Eccles. ii. 26, 'To a man that is good in his sight, God giveth wisdom and knowledge.' Therefore, though ye have seen cunning lawyers by much reading, and expert physicians by long study, yet you could never see a perfect, and sound, and judicious divine without holiness. I cannot tell how; this knowledge is rather feeling than learning in the abundance of the heart, or an extreme study sent by God unto good men, like the ram which was brought unto Abraham, when he would sacrifice his son, Gen. xxii. 13.

As Solomon saith, 'The knowledge of good things is understanding,' Prov. ix. 10; so none but they which are holy have this understanding. He which can say with David, Ps. cxix. 117, 'I love thy law, and keep thy precepts,' may follow with David, 'I have more understanding than my teachers, and know more than the ancient.'

He which cannot say with David, Ps. xlv. 1, 'My heart meditateth a good matter,' cannot follow with David, 'My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.' This is the equity of God; they which are unwilling to obey, are not thought worthy to know; for what should he do with his talent, which will not use it? He which forbids us to cast pearls before swine, doth stay his own hand from casting knowledge to the ungodly; they may know so much as shall condemn them, but they shall never know what will save them. When Christ heard Peter say, 'Thou art the Son of the living God,' Christ answered, 'Flesh and blood hath not taught thee this,' Mat. xvi. 16, 17;' shewing that carnal men have not this knowledge. This is the word of which Christ saith, 'All men do not receive it,' Mat. xix. 11. It is true, that 'the Spirit breatheth where it will,' John iii. 8; but it will breathe upon none but her lovers. Wisdom is like the daughter of God, which he marrieth to none but to him which loves her, and sues for her. As David could not understand why the wicked prospered, until he entered into the sanctuary of God, Ps. lxxiii. 17; and as Aaron might not enter the sanctuary where God did answer, until he had sanctified himself; so if we will understand mysteries, and hear God himself speak, we must put off our sins, as Moses put off his shoes, Exod. iii. 5, or else we shall be like images which have ears, and cannot hear, Ps. cxv. 6. When Paul heard mysteries, he was rapt into the third heaven, 1 Cor. xii. 2; when God would talk with his church, he saith, 'I will take her aside into the wilderness, and then I will speak friendly unto her,' Hosea ii. 14; so when we will learn divinity, we must go aside from the world, and sequester our sins, and lift up our minds above the earth, or else it will not stay with us. As the Spirit went from Saul when he sinned; so when knowledge hath saluted the wicked, she bids them farewell; like unto a martin, which will not build but in fair houses. It is said in John xiv. 15, when Jesus went to eat the passover, he came to a chamber which was trimmed; so the chamber which receiveth God, the heart which should lodge knowledge, must be trimmed, and all the sinful corners swept; or else, as Samuel would not come to Saul, 1 Sam. xv. 16, so wisdom will not come to that host. There is an harbinger which goeth alway before the knowledge of God, to prepare the house, and this is love, the bond of perfection. 'They which have love (saith John) know God; but they which have not love know not God,' 1 John iv. 7, though they have never so much knowledge beside. Unto good Nathanael Christ said, 'Thou shalt see greater things than these;' but unto the obstinate Jews he said, 'Seeing ye will not see,' Mat. xiii. 14; like

Hagar which had the well before her, and did not see the water, Gen. xxi. 19. He which cannot say with Paul, 'We have the Spirit of Christ,' 1 Cor. ii. 12, cannot say with Paul, 'We have knowledge,' 1 Cor. viii. 1. Holy men were always interpreters of God's word, because a godly mind easiliest pierceth into God's meaning, according to that, 'The pure in heart shall see God,' Mat. v. 8; and that in John vii. 17, 'If any man will do God's will, he shall understand the doctrine whether it be of God or no.' And in Ps. cxi. 10, 'They which keep thy precepts have a good understanding.' And that in 1 Cor. ii. 15, 'The spiritual man understandeth all things.' And therefore, 'the fear of the Lord' is not only called 'the beginning of wisdom,' Prov. i. 7; but in Prov. ii. 5, it is taken for wisdom itself. As when Christ taught in the temple, they asked, 'How knoweth this man the Scriptures, seeing he never learned them?' John vii. 15; so it is a wonder what learning some men have, which have no learning; like Priscilla and Aquila, poor tent-makers, which were able to school Apollos, that great clerk, a man renowned for his learning, Acts xviii. 25. What can we say to this but as Christ said, 'Father, so it pleaseth thee,' Luke x. 21. As Jacob came so soon with the venison, and his father asked him how he came by it so suddenly, Jacob answered, 'Because the Lord thy God brought it suddenly to mine hand,' Gen. xxvii. 20; so the holy and righteous men cannot give any reason why they conceive the words of God so easily, and the wicked do conceive them so hardly; but that God brings the meaning suddenly to their hearts, as we read in Luke xxiv. 45. When the disciples were settled in the profession of Christ, it is said, that Christ opened their understanding, and made them understand the Scriptures, so suddenly came their knowledge. So we read in Prov. i. 23. Wisdom promiseth to the righteous, 'If thou wilt turn at my correction, I will pour out my heart unto you, and make you understand my words.' A schoolmaster might say to his scholars, I will pour out mine heart unto you; but he cannot say as God saith, I will make you understand mine heart. Therefore, if the queen of Sheba thought the servants of Solomon happy, because they heard his wisdom, 1 Kings x. 8, how happy was Solomon himself, that served God which gave him wisdom! 'Come unto me,' saith Christ, 'all ye which are weary, and I will refresh you,' Mat. xi. 28. As Christ hath no comfort but for the weary, so he hath no wisdom but for the righteous. They are his brethren, and sisters, and father, and mother, Mark iii. 35. There is a kind of familiarity between God and the righteous, that he makes them of his counsel, as Solomon saith, Prov. iii. 32, 'His

secrets are with the righteous.' Ps. xxv. 14, 'His secrets are revealed unto them that fear the Lord.'

They are like John, the beloved disciple, which leaned on his bosom, John xiii. 25; like Moses, to whom he shewed himself, Exod. iii.; like Simeon, that embraced him in his arms, Luke ii.; like the three disciples which went up to the mount to see his glory. So we read of Abraham, Gen. xviii. 17, 'Shall I hide it from Abraham?' saith God, as though this were an offence in God, if he should tell the righteous no more than he tells the wicked; therefore because Abraham was a good man, he told him more than he shewed all the rest. As Adam's knowledge was perfect, so long as his righteousness was untainted; so the nearer we come to that righteousness again, the more things come to our knowledge; according to that, Prov. xxviii. 'They that seek the Lord understand all things. Such an heart God hath given to his servants, like a touchstone, or a lamp to go before them to examine all things, as they go in this dark wilderness, lest they should take error for truth, evil for good, or their own will for the will of God; that they which hate evil might be preserved from evil, as David was from the blood of Nabal, 1 Sam. xxv. Now because none but the righteous have this lamp before them, you see what a difference there is between the knowledge of the godly, and the knowledge of the wicked.

As the windows of the temple were large within, but narrow without, so they which are within the church have greater light than they which are without. They sit like Pharaoh in the darkness of Egypt, when the other dwell like Israel in the light of Goshen. Knowledge is easy to him which loveth knowledge, saith Solomon; but the scorner seeketh knowledge and findeth it not, saith Solomon, Prov. iv. 'The spiritual man,' saith Paul, searcheth the deep things of God, 1 Cor. ii. 14, but 'the natural man,' saith Paul, 'perceiveth not the things of God.' 'Thou hast revealed these things to babes,' saith Christ, 'but thou hast hid them from the wise of the world,' Luke x. 21. 'If any man will do God's will, he, saith Christ, 'shall understand the doctrine;' but to the obstinate Jews Christ saith, 'You cannot understand my talk.' 'My sheep hear my voice,' saith Christ; but to the wicked Christ saith, 'You cannot hear my words.' 'Believest thou for this?' saith he to Nathanael, 'thou shalt see greater things than these;' but, 'if ye believe not,' saith Isaiah, 'ye shall not understand,' Isaiah vii. 9.

That these scriptures might be fulfilled, you see that as sin is called blindness, 2 Chron. vi. 18, so sinners are called blind, Isaiah lvi. 10, and may be called 'strangers in Israel.' Until we be born

again, we are like Nicodemus, which knew not what it was to be born again, John iii.

Until we become zealous ourselves, we are like Festus, which thought zeal madness, Acts xxvi. Until we be humble ourselves, we are like Michal, which mocked David for his humility, 2 Sam. vi. 16. It was true then, and it is true now, and it will be true always, which Paul observeth, 1 Cor. i. 18, that to some, religion shall seem foolishness. The reason of all this Paul layeth down in a word; if ye ask why the wicked cannot understand heavenly things, he saith, 'because they are spiritually discerned,' 1 Cor. ii. 14, therefore how should he discern them that hath not the Spirit?

For this cause Wisdom is not said to be justified of any, but of her own children, Mat. xi. 19; neither doth Christ say, that any sheep hear his voice, but his own sheep: 'My sheep,' saith he, John x. 27, 'hear my voice.' They follow their shepherd, they hear his voice, they understand his law, they judge of his judgments, they have the measure of his words; all is open, and plain, and manifest, and clear unto them; they search deeper, and judge righter, and know sooner, and though they have no learning, yet they have better judgment than the learned; whereas the other, that labour and study without God, walk in a labyrinth and fall into doubts, while they seek resolutions. When a wicked man reads the Scriptures, he seeth no difference between the word of God and the word of men; like Cleophas, which talked with Christ, and knew not Christ, Luke xxiv. 16. When he speaks of religion, he flutters like a young bird, which cannot fly because her wings are not grown; when he prayeth, his prayer is like a child's grace, that understandeth not one word that he saith. He which hath but a show of holiness, hath but a show of wisdom; a little knowledge is in his head, and there is no knowledge in his heart. An evil man may know something, and speak something of his reading and hearing, as Job saith, 'There is a spirit in man,' that is, every man hath a kind of knowledge, 'but the inspiration of the Lord giveth understanding,' Job xxxii. 8; as though the sinner's understanding did not deserve to be called understanding

If the wicked man speak anything that is good, he speaks by rote; but he which speaks not out of the abundance of his heart is soon drawn dry, Luke vi. 45. The preaching of the word doth not become him; it is harsh and unkind in his mouth, as though it came out of a wrong bow, or like unto a shuttle, which flittereth from the hand of a child; he is in the pulpit as the guest at the banquet

which wanted his wedding garment, Mat. xxii. 11; he speaks not like one which hath authority, Mat. vii. 29, but as one that hath no authority, and always his conscience sounds unto him, 'What hast thou to do to take my word in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest to be reformed?' Ps. l. 16. Therefore be renewed, that ye may know what the will of God is; this is the A B C, and primer, and grammar, the first lesson and last lesson of a Christian, to know the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God, which must make us good, and perfect, and acceptable ourselves. The will of God is always good, and acceptable, and perfect, howsoever it seem to us: though it condemn us of evil, yet it is good; though we see not how it is perfect, yet it is perfect; nay, it is so perfect, that we cannot see the perfection of it; as the sun is so bright that we cannot behold the brightness of it. First, it seems good unto man before it be acceptable; when it is acceptable, then it seems perfect; and as God's will doth seem to us, so do we seem to him; if his will cannot seem good, and acceptable, and perfect to us, much less may our will seem good, or acceptable, or perfect unto him, for this is our goodness, to acknowledge his goodness. If it be such a contentment to know the will of God, what shall keep us from the knowledge of it? Shall sin, which is the worst thing in the world? Because we will not renew our minds, therefore we are ignorant of so many things which we would know, and until we be willing to follow the word, we shall never thoroughly understand it, but buzz and grope at it like owls, which pry at the sun out of a barn. Oh what a benefit had Solomon lost, if he had lost his wisdom which God gave him! 1 Kings iii. 2. As great a benefit dost thou lose, if thou lose the knowledge of God's will; for from the day that a man cannot discern the will of Satan from the will of Christ, every heresy seemeth truth, every evil seems good. And this hath been the beginning of all errors in the church; because men did not love the truth, therefore God would not reveal his truth unto them. Therefore I conclude as I began, 'Be ye changed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is the good will of God, and acceptable, and perfect.'

Now a word of the sacrament. There is an infant to be received into the church, which putteth us in mind of the promise which we made unto God, when we were received into the church ourselves. This sacrament was instituted by Christ, when he was baptized by John in the river of Jordan, Mat. iii. 14; and it succeedeth circumcision, as the communion was ordained instead of the passover. So

soon as we are born, we are baptized, 'in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,' Mat. xxviii. 19, to signify that we owe a duty unto God from the day we come into the world. In this baptism our bodies are washed with water, to signify how our sins are washed with Christ's blood; when our bodies are washed, they are taken out of the water again, to signify how we shall be raised from death to life by the resurrection of Christ, and how we should rise from sin to righteousness. Thus we begin our life with a solemn promise to God before the church, to serve him with our bodies and souls till death us depart.[1]

Now let us remember how we have kept this promise with the Lord, or rather how we have broken promise with him. Then we gave ourselves to God, but since we have given ourselves to sin. Then we promised to renounce the world, but ever since we have embraced the world. Therefore now let us begin to pay that which we owed so long, and pray the Lord, which hath instituted this sacrament as a seal of his mercy, to receive this child into his favour, as we receive it into his church; to baptize it with his Spirit, as we baptize it with water, and pour upon it his grace, as we give it the sign of grace.

[1] Now more commonly expressed, 'do part.'—Ed.

# THE PILGRIM'S WISH.

# THE PILGRIM'S WISH.

*I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.*—PHILIP. I. 23.

HERE is Paul's desire, 'to be dissolved;' and the cause, 'that he might be with Christ:' wherein first you shall see the difference between the faithful and the wicked; how one loatheth this life, and the other longeth after it. Secondly, because the apostle seems to desire death, you shall see whether any man may wish to die. Thirdly, because after this dissolution he hopes to be with Christ, you shall see the diversity of judgments between Paul and the papists, which think when they are dead that they shall go on to purgatory. Lastly, because the souls which are with Christ cannot walk as they did when they lived upon earth, you shall hear a little of walking spirits, which have been so much talked of in time of popery, and were taken for the souls of them which were dead. After we will speak a little of the sacrament which ye come to receive, and so commit you to God.

*I desire to be dissolved.* Before Christ's coming, when the kings or patriarchs died, it is said that they went to their fathers, as we read of David and Solomon, 1 Kings ii. 10; 2 Chron. ix. 31, xxi. 1; Acts vii., &c. But after Christ's coming, when the faithful die, they are said to go to Christ, as we read of the penitent thief, Luke xxiii. 43. Not because the patriarchs went not to Christ, as well as they; but because yet Christ was not ascended to heaven, therefore they are not said to go to Christ, although if they went to heaven, they must needs go to Christ; because Christ, touching his Godhead, was always in heaven.

*I desire to be dissolved.* As the worldly long for Christ to come to them, so the faithful long to go to Christ; for unless we ascend to him, as he descended to us, his descending is in vain: because he came down, that we might go up; he descended to take our

flesh, we ascend to take his kingdom ; he descended to be crucified, we ascend to be glorified ; he descended to hell, we ascend to heaven ; that is, to joy, to glory, to bliss, to our Father, to our Saviour, to our Comforter, to angels, to saints, to eternal life. Therefore good cause had Paul to desire to be with Christ, that he might be at rest ; for no doubt it was the sweetest voice that ever the thief heard in this life, when Christ said unto him, 'This day shalt thou be with me in paradise,' Luke xxiii. 43. Besides, as Paul persecuted before, so he was after persecuted himself, as he tells the Corinthians, 2 Cor. xi. 25, 'I was thrice beaten with rods, I was once stoned, I suffered thrice shipwreck,' &c. Therefore good cause had Paul to desire to be with Christ, that he might be out of trouble. Yet he will not dissolve himself, but desireth to be dissolved ; that is, that he which brought him into this world, would take him out of the world ; neither doth he wish, or pray, or make any petition to God to take away his life, but tells him his desire, desiring to be dissolved. To desire is not to pray, but shews what we approve. Neither doth he desire so to be dissolved, as though he were weary of his labours, and would suffer no more for Christ ; but he is content to live, as he saith in verse 24, 'Nevertheless for me to abide in the flesh, were better for you ;' as if he should say, To do you good, I am content to suffer evil, and stay still from Christ, whom I long to be with. Seeing then that he will not dissolve himself, nor pray to be dissolved, but is content to live still, why doth he say, 'I desire to be dissolved'? Only to shew what he preferreth in his desire. If he might choose life or death for his own respect, he could be content to leave his friends, and riches, and pleasure, and life, and all, only to be with Christ. This seems to be a good lesson for sick men, when they can live no longer ; then to be with Christ, were better than to be with the glutton, which never thought of heaven till he was in hell, Luke xvi. ; but Paul was not sick nor sore when he desired to be dissolved, therefore this is not only for the sick, but for the whole. If he had wished to live and stay still in the world, no man need to be taught to say after him ; for young and old desire not to be dissolved ; but few are content to be dissolved. To a natural man, in this life nothing is so sweet as life ; and he which is in love with this world, seldom dieth quietly on his bed ; but to a mind which misliketh this world, nothing can come so welcome as death, because it takes him out of the world. This is it which Paul would have us learn, that nothing in this world is so precious, that for it we should desire to live, or stay from God one hour. Though all may not wish to die, yet all must subscribe

to this, that death is better than life, because it leads to Christ, which, when Paul had thoroughly tasted, he was satisfied of all things else, and desired to live no longer, that he might be with Christ. Herein appeareth the end of man's life, which, when he hath obtained, he desires to live no longer, how great riches, and honours, and friends soever he leave behind him. From the time he knoweth Christ crucified, and begins like Enoch to walk with God, Gen. v. 22, he crieth ever after with the apostle, 'I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.' 'Who shall deliver me from this body of sin?' Rom. vii. 24; 'death were to me advantage.' Even as Simeon rejoiced that Christ came to him, Luke ii. 28, so the faithful rejoice that they shall go to Christ.

The necessity of sin is so irksome to him which knoweth the vileness of sin, that the faithful man, but to do good, would not live out of heaven, no, not an hour. This made the martyrs so willing to abide any kind of death that tyranny could devise, to be rid of their sinful bands, and this corruptible burden, which presseth down the soul, that looks after Christ, like his disciples, when he ascended to heaven, Acts i. 10. All is trouble, and weariness, and vanity to the godly mind; whether he eat, or drink, or sleep, he counteth it a servitude unto the flesh, and wisheth with David to be rid from these necessities; so the knowledge and love of God maketh a man forget his own flesh, maketh him to despise the whole world, taketh away the difference from life and death, changeth his nature, which he could never overcome, and teacheth him to renounce his dear self, and say, though he should die, 'Not my will, but thy will be done.' All this appeareth even in this example, what operation is in the knowledge and love of Christ: it made the world irksome unto Paul, which all men naturally desire; it made death pleasant unto him, which all men naturally abhor; although they be weary of their life, and have no pleasure from morning to night, yet it will not please them to change, which they needs must; they never loathe, but love, their miseries; I will not die one hour to live for ever. Do not the wicked themselves prophesy by their fear of death a worse condition of some dreadful judgment after this life, prepared for sinners and all that contemn God, when none but they stand in such fear of death? Why doth one wish it, and another tremble to hear of it? If it were but a sleep, no man would fear it at all; for who feareth to take his rest when the night approacheth? If it did take away sense and feeling, and make men trees or stones, no man would fear it at all; for who would fear strokes, if he could feel no more than a stone? Or who would care for anything, if he had no sense of

anything? Would any man tremble so to be as the dead creatures, which have no sense of evil? They must needs be in a better case than the happiest man in this life, which is not without the sense of evil. Therefore this fear of death, which you see in all but the faithful, doth presage some strange torment, some heavy change, and sharp punishment to those men, which they begin to taste already before they die, like the spirit which persecuted Saul before his end, 1 Sam. xvi. 14. They desire not to be dissolved, but they fear to be dissolved; they go not to Christ, but their departure is an everlasting departure from Christ to the damned, to the devils, to hell, without either end, or ease, or any patience to endure it.

Thus you see that no man is willing to die before his conscience be quieted toward God, and that he can catch some hope of a better life after this life. He which knows that he shall go to Christ, it is impossible that he should die unwillingly; but he which cannot hope for a better world, must needs leave this world ungrudgingly, and fear death more than all the terrors of life. He had rather to be sick, and cold, and hungry, and want, and beg, than go with death; because he knoweth what he suffereth here, but he knoweth not what he shall suffer hereafter. Therefore he which is not willing to be dissolved, hath not learned Christ yet as Paul did; for no man esteemeth this life when he begins to taste of the next, but then the love of the world doth fall from him like the mantle of Elias, when he was rapt into heaven, 2 Kings ii. 14.

The apostle had seen many good things in his days, and was never satisfied; willing to be dissolved, but thirsted still; and no water could quench his thirst until he drank of the water of life, and then he thirsted no more; so nothing can fill the soul which was made for God, but God alone. Riches, and honours, and pleasures, did not make Simeon willing to die, but the sight of Christ, Luke ii. 29. Happy are the eyes which see him, for they are as willing to die as Simeon was. So soon as John Baptist did see our Saviour, and knew that it was he, he debased himself as if he had been nobody, and would not be accounted of, but sought to lose the opinion of the people, that Christ might have all, John i. 20, Mat. iii. 11, although he was a prophet, and more than a prophet, and not a greater amongst the sons of women. So when Paul had seen his Saviour, he forgat all that he loved, all that he desired, and all that he possessed; no joy, no glory, no life now but to die. All things must yield to the Son, and be content, with John, that he increase and we decrease. This is our glory and life, that he lives in glory. 'It is enough,' saith Jacob, 'for me, that Joseph my son liveth,'

Gen. xlv. 28; it is enough for us that Jesus our Saviour reigneth. If the head be crowned, all the body is more honoured; therefore let us glory that Christ is glorified, and rejoice as much that he is ascended as our fathers rejoiced that he descended; for where the head is, there the body must needs be.

*I desire to be dissolved.* He calleth his death not a destruction, but a dissolution, for three causes: first, he departeth from this life, and hath no more society with them that live upon the earth; secondly, his soul departeth from the body until the day of resurrection; then she findeth her own body again, and they rejoice like friends which are met together; thirdly, he departeth from this vale of misery, into the paradise of joy and all felicity, to live and reign with God for ever, in assurance whereof he saith that he shall be with Christ; so that death is the way to Christ. As the dove found no rest until she came to the ark, Gen. viii. 9, so the faithful find no rest till they come to Christ, they go through the wilderness like other men. Until the Jews arrived at Canaan, all their life was spent in sinful Egypt, or in the dreadful desert; during the time of their journey they had no settled rest, or continuing pleasure. Peace beginneth when the battle endeth; there is the prerogative of the dead, lest death should be too fearful to us. The best of God's blessings are behind, that is, everlasting life, and the way to it is death; thou art going to joy, therefore look not for it, until thou come to thy journey's end, Rev. ii. 10. If Canaan, the land of peace, the land of plenty, the land of pleasure, be in the wilderness, stay here, march no further. Whither do you go, like the pilgrims of Israel, if Canaan be in the wilderness? But Paul looks for the crown at the goal. He is not with Christ, but trusts to be with Christ; he is not in heaven, but he hopes to come to heaven; and this hope led him through the wilderness, that he murmured not like the Israelites, but only longed for that day, when Christ shall say unto him, as he said to the penitent thief, 'This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.' Thus you have heard the difference between the faithful and wicked, how the one loatheth this life, and the other longeth after it.

Now we come to our question. Simeon said, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,' Luke ii. 29. So Paul saith, 'I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.' They doubted not, as the papists do, what should become of them after death, for one says that he goes to Christ, and the other says that he goes to peace; therefore it seems that purgatory was not yet found when the just men went to peace. This is one of the fruits of a godly life, it hath hope, saith Solomon, in the end, Prov. xiv. 32, xi. 7; in

death it warranteth a man of life, and when the flesh saith *fear*, and the serpent *despair*, it makes the flesh crouch, and the serpent fly, and the soul rejoice while death is opening the prison door, that she may fly to her country from whence she came. Therefore what shall I say to purgatory, if Paul go to Christ, and Simeon go to peace? Some say it is in the air; some say that it is in the earth; some under the earth; some a little above hell. Thus Nebuchadnezzar cannot assoil his own dream, Dan. iv. 1. You must understand that purgatory is like your painted sepulchres, which were framed more for the living than for the dead; for you know that the locusts of Rome live by trentals, and dirges, and masses for the dead, as the silversmiths in Ephesus lived by images, Acts xix. 25; and therefore, as they were loath that images should go down, so they are loath that their purgatory should be quenched, for it is the gainfullest lie in all popery, for out of this lake issue their masses, and dirges, and trentals for the dead. They are said for the dead, but they make for the living; for 'the dead have no portion of all that is done under the sun.' Do what you will, say what you can, masses, dirges, or trentals, they have no portion in it, for they have received their reward already, and 'the tree lieth where it fell;' yet these foolish virgins hope for oil of the wise virgins, and think they shall be paid for other men's labours, and alms, and trentals, and pilgrimages, and masses, as though they never read that 'the just shall live by his own faith,' Gal. iii. 11, that he which believeth shall not go to judgment, John v. 24, but pass from death to life, that 'they that die in the Lord rest from their labours,' Rev. xiv. 13. How do they go presently into paradise, if they stay at purgatory, and fire, and torments? Hath Christ satisfied for us, and must we now make satisfaction for ourselves? Whither the glutton and the beggar are gone, Luke xvi., thither must we all, that is, to Abraham's bosom, or hell-fire. There are but two kinds of men, and therefore but two ways, and where then is purgatory, which the best of the fathers confesseth that he could never find in Scripture? Therefore take heed of hell, for purgatory is a scare-babe.

Furthermore, when Paul saith, that he shall go to Christ, this seems to resolve the old question often debated among the simple people, once deluded, whether the souls of men departed walk after death, and appear unto men, exhorting them to this or that, as Gregory, or some counterfeit, reporteth in his dialogues. The apostles, before their full growth, might seem to be encumbered with this error, because when they saw Christ walking upon the waters, they said, 'It is a spirit.' And when Peter knocked at the door in the

night, they said to Rhoda, a damsel, 'It is his angel,' Acts xii. 15. Which error was drawn from the illusion of Satan, and vulgar opinion received from Pythagoras, which taught that the souls of men departed did return into the bodies of other men after death, either for correction, or for reward. If they were good souls, then they were preferred to better men; if they had been bad souls, then they were cast into worse bodies than they had before: a fine philosophical dream.

This deluded Herod: when he heard of Christ, he supposed that John Baptist was risen again, whom he had beheaded; and the better sort of the people, as we read in Mat. xvi. 14, dreamed that Christ was Elias, or John Baptist, or Jeremiah, or some of the prophets risen again. But touching the soul once departed from the body, that it returns not, nor can return into the world, many examples, and testimonies, and reasons, and the order of our resurrection declareth. The souls of the righteous are in the hands of the Lord, and no man or devil can take them out of his hands, John x. 28, 29; the souls of the wicked are in the hands of the devil, and God will not take them out of his hands. And therefore Abraham saith, 'He which is here, cannot come from hence; and they which be there, cannot come from thence,' Luke xvi.; for then the pains of hell were not everlasting pains, nor the joys of heaven everlasting joys, but temporal, like the pains and joys of this world. Therefore it is no soul which walks about. How then? What is this which I see in the night like such a man, and such a man? The devil, which changeth himself into an angel of light to deceive, can change himself into the likeness of a man much more. That is it which thou seest, as Saul saw Samuel, 1 Sam. xxviii. 8, not Samuel himself; for could the witch raise Samuel out of the grave, which could not keep herself out of the grave? Or could the devil disturb the prophet after death? Then he should never be in quiet if the devil could disturb him, because he disquieteth the godly so much while they live.

If this apparition be called *Samuel*, how doth he call it *Samuel*, if it be not Samuel? As the books of Calvin are called *Calvin;* as the picture of Beza is called *Beza;* as he which playeth the king upon the stage is called a *king;* as the golden mice and emerods which the Philistines laid in the ark were called *mice* and *emerods*, although they were but mere shapes and figures of them; so this likeness of Samuel is called *Samuel*, though it was not Samuel indeed, but a counterfeit shape of Samuel. For God would not answer Saul before by oracle, nor by priest, nor by prophet, and would he

answer him by the dead, which doth forbid to ask counsel of the dead? No, saith Abraham; 'they have Moses and the prophets,' Luke xvi.: as if he should say, Let them learn of the books of the dead, for the dead shall not return unto them. Again, if it had been Samuel himself, which had taught Saul to worship God, would that holy prophet have received worship himself, as this spirit did? Again, if it had been Samuel, Saul's schoolmaster, which taught him always to repent while he lived, he would rather have exhorted him to repentance now than before, seeing the day of his death was so near. But you will say, Whosoever it was, it seems that he could prophesy of things to come, for he foretold Saul's death. Can the devil prophesy? This was an easy matter for the devil to prophesy, because he knew that David was anointed before, and therefore Saul must be removed, that he might reign, as he was anointed. Secondly, he knew that Samuel had prophesied his confusion; and therefore he must be degraded, that the prophecy might be fulfilled. Thirdly, he did see the Philistines coming against him, and therefore no marvel if he did aim that his death was near at hand, seeing a man might prophesy the same.

If any man be not satisfied with this, to believe that the souls of the dead do not walk after their dissolution, let me reason with him thus: Is it a soul which thou seest? Why, a soul is a spirit, and cannot be seen, no more than the voice or an echo. Didst thou ever see thine own soul, though it hath been ever with thee since thou wast born? Dost thou think it is a body? Why, a body cannot walk without a soul; for the soul is the life which moveth the body. If thou say it is a body and soul too, then why doth Paul call death a dissolution? It is a separation of the soul from the body. If the body and soul be not dissolved, then the man is not dead, but living still. If thou say the soul is come to the body, and the body is risen to the soul for that time, then I can say no more to thee, but believe thine own eyes. If thou thinkest that it is such a man's body which thou seest, look in the grave, and open the ground, and there thou shalt see the body where it is laid, even while this vizor walks in thy sight. Therefore apparitions are no other than that which appeared to Saul. Thus the devil hath many ways to deceive; and this is one, and a dangerous one, to draw us from God's word to visions, and dreams, and apparitions, upon which many of the doctrines of the papists are grounded.

They had never heard of purgatory but for these spirits that walked in the night, and told them that they were the souls of such and such, which suffered in fire till their masses, and alms, and

pilgrimages did ransom them out. So these night-spirits begat purgatory, and purgatory begat trentals, as one serpent hatcheth another.

Yet a third question ariseth out of these words, and that is this: Whether a Christian may wish for death? As Paul desired, so may we desire, if we have Paul's spirit. As Christ told his disciples when they asked him whether they should pray for fire from heaven, as Elias did, Christ answered that they knew not of what spirit they were, Luke ix. 54; as if he should say, If you were of Elias's spirit, and did pray with the same mind, and to the same end that he did, then you might pray as he prayed. The wicked wish to die, because they would be rid of the cross, and suffer no more for God; as Cain, so soon as he was cursed, and knew that his life should be a torment, he sought to die, to prevent the just judgment of God, and spite him, as it were, which should punish sins. So do the people oftentimes which have not to satisfy hunger, and the sick which faint of an uncurable disease, and the weary captives in prison, galleys, and bonds. As for the faithful, if they at any time wish to die, they pray for death as the last remedy against sin and Satan; even as they pray in Revelation for the hastening of Christ's coming to judgment, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly,' Rev. xxii. 20, for the shortening of the days of sin, lest all flesh should perish. But they which wish for death in this sort, would die as the will of God hath ordained, and mortify their flesh to abide these troubles, and still by faith suppress the dolorous grief of sin, by frequent meditation of inward joy, received by grace in Christ, and therein revive themselves, as with the earnest-penny of their inheritance, which they shall receive at the fit time, when it shall comfort them much to have suffered so long. Much, therefore, have they to answer, which are not contented to die in peace, and stay till they be dissolved; but as though themselves were the authors of life and death, whose cruel heart give wrongful commission to the bloody hand, to cut asunder that which God hath joined, the loving soul and their body; as Judas, Ahithophel, Saul, and Pilate did; not one of these was good in life or death. Yet the author of the Maccabees commendeth Razis most of all, for that which was the greatest sin that ever he did, for killing himself, 2 Mac. xiv. Man was not born of his own pleasure, neither must he die at his own lust; or else it had been good for Job, which suffered more than any saint except Christ, to make away himself, as Judas did. But why is it commanded then, 'Thou shalt not kill'? If thou mayest not kill another, much less mayest thou kill thyself. As for the example of

Samson, Judges xvi. 30, which may seem to oppose against this, in that he killed himself whenas he pulled the house upon his own head, and all that were with him: understand that he was a figure of Christ, which vanquished more in his death than all his life; and it appeareth that he had warrant from God, in that his strength being taken from him, was, for the act, in a moment restored to him upon his prayer. And the epistle to the Hebrews, xi. 13, to clear that fact, saith, that he did it of faith; that is, knowing that he had deserved to die, and that by these means the enemies of God should be destroyed, he submitted himself to the good will of God, like a good captain, which ventured his life to kill his enemies; therefore we must not look to particular examples, but to the general law. Wherefore let no man do this evil, that any good may come of it, but rather follow the advice of the holy apostle, as it becometh us; with patience let us run out the race which is set before us.

Here I might shew you, that they are guilty of their own death, that kill themselves with surfeiting, intemperance, drunkenness, &c. Although they love their life too dear, yet they take all means to hasten their deaths. Thus much of purgatory, and night-spirits, and praying for death.

Now it remaineth, that as the Levites sanctified their brethren before they did eat the passover, so I would prepare you before you eat this holy sacrament, of which the passover was but a sign. The Jews were taught of God, before they did eat the passover, to put away leaven out of their houses the day before, Exod. xii. 15. Hath God care of leaven? No; this is it which the apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. v.: before ye come to the Lord's supper, 'purge the old leaven of maliciousness and wickedness out of your hearts;' that is, the leaven which you should purge out of your houses. Therefore mark what the apostle writeth to the Corinthians, 1 Cor xi. (I believe it is a matter which you did never consider), 'For this cause many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep,' or die. For what cause? Because they received this holy sacrament unworthily and unreverently, before they were prepared with faith, and hope, and repentance. 'For this cause many are weak and sick among you, and many die.' Who did ever think that his sickness, or his wants, or his infirmities did grow, for that he received the Lord's supper unworthily? Many causes have been supposed, but this cause was never thought of. Have any of you said in distresses of body or mind, This is come unto me, because I did receive the blessed sacrament of Christ unworthily; because I came not pre-

pared with that mind, as they do which believe and know God? Yet the apostle, which by his divine spirit knew the cause of these calamities among the Corinthians, doth depute their strange diseases and sudden death to none other cause, but to their unworthy and unreverent receiving of his holy sacrament. Nay, he saith further, that 'he which eateth and drinketh this sacrament unworthily, eateth and drinketh his own damnation,' 1 Cor. xi. 27; that is, he taketh possession of death, hell, and damnation, even while he eats, as the devil entered into Judas while he received. Now if your physician should warn you of such a thing, that you take it in season and measure, or else it is a poison, and will kill you, I suppose you would observe the season and measure, and take it in such order as he prescribeth, as near as you could, if you believe him; so if you believe the apostle, that you receive the sacrament to your damnation, if you receive it unworthily, I am sure you will not take it unreverently or rashly for all the world. If I had the words of motion to speak that which might be spoken of this matter, it would fright Judas himself, that no man would come to this holy banquet without his wedding garment, Mat. xxii. Consider but this, how you would come into the presence of God, how you would prepare yourselves to come before the Maker of heaven and earth, which searcheth the reins, and knoweth every corner of the heart. If ever ye did approach unto God, if ever ye came near unto the Lord, you never came so near as now, when you come to receive his body and blood, and are united unto him in one spiritual body; and yet, peradventure, many come not so prepared, so cleansed, so dressed, so trimmed, into the presence of God, as Esther did into the presence of Ahasuerus, Esther v. What do you think of these elements? What do you imagine of this bread and wine? They are seals. What seals? Seals of his word, seals of God's promises, seals of your adoption. If ever you were instructed out of this book, that instruction is confirmed and ratified unto you now by Christ's seal. Christ hath not ordained sacraments in his church for a fashion or dumb show, that you should feel, or see, or taste, but as the woman which had a bloody flux, when she touched the hem of Christ's garment, he said that virtue was gone out of him; that is, all the graces which these signs represent, that is, all the blessings that Christ Jesus hath purchased unto man by his death. Now, because if you receive this sacrament rightly, you are united unto Christ, as the members with the head; if ever you did believe, or love, or repent before, this requireth you to believe, and love, and repent more,

because now you are Christ's body, which shews that ye must obey Christ the head, like members of the body, for the body is ruled by the head. What have you now to receive all these blessings? If you have not faith, how can you lay hold of any promises or merits of Christ, to say, This is mine? If you had a hand to take, and a faith to apprehend, now you might eat of the bread which is better than manna, which he that tasteth doth not hunger again after any pleasure in the world. Here is enough for Abraham and Abraham's seed. Come unto it, all that thirst, and it will refresh you. Happier is that man now that hath his wedding garment, than the rich glutton, that fareth deliciously, and goeth in purple every day, Luke xvi. Now you are the Lord's guests, and the Lord himself is your feast, and this feast is before you, the holiest meat that ever ye did eat, and the comfortablest meat that ever you did eat, and the dangerousest meat that ever you did eat. You stand upon life or death, you eat to salvation or damnation; there is nothing in this world which you can receive with greater benefit, or with greater peril. Adam did not eat the forbidden fruit with greater danger, Gen. iii. Adam could not taste the tree of life with greater fruit than you may taste and receive this sacrament. The ark was a sign of mercy, yet Uzzah was slain for touching the ark unreverently, 2 Sam. vi. Circumcision was a good thing, yet circumcision did not profit the Shechemites, but was a way to make their enemies to slay them, Gen. xxxiv.; because they were not circumcised for religion, but for lucre; so if you receive for custom, and not for devotion, this sacrament shall be to you as circumcision was to them. Therefore take heed how you receive as they received, lest you meet with a curse when you look for a blessing. If thou rememberest any sin against God, or against thy neighbour, leave thine offering at the altar, and be reconciled before thou come into his presence; for if stubble come to fire, there is no way but burn. Now, beloved, let faith, and love, and repentance, have their perfect work, that you may receive this sacrament as Christ would have you receive it; and God grant you as much profit by it, as is offered in it; and so much comfort of it, as it hath brought to any, whosoever have received it faithfully, reverently, and worthily before you!

# THE GODLY MAN'S REQUEST.

# THE GODLY MAN'S REQUEST.

*Teach us, O Lord, to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.*—Ps. XC. 12.

This psalm was compiled by Moses, as ye may see by the title, at what time the spies returned from the land of Canaan, and God, for the murmuring of the people, pronounced, that all which were above twenty years old should die in the wilderness, except Caleb and Joshua, that encouraged their brethren to go into Canaan. Now, when Moses heard the sentence of death pronounced against himself, and all the Jews which came out of Egypt, except only two, Caleb and Joshua, that all should die before they came to the land which they sought, he prayeth thus for himself and the rest, 'Teach us, O Lord, to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom;' that is, seeing we must needs die, teach us to think of our death, that we may die in thy fear, to live again; shewing us how the consideration of our mortality will make us apply our hearts to godliness. He which is tottering himself, had need lean unto a stable thing; therefore a wavering man is commended here to constant wisdom. Man is mortal, wisdom is immortal; yet by wisdom man becomes immortal too; therefore Moses, thinking of his death, runneth to wisdom, as a remedy against death. I have chosen a text fit for the time,[1] which warneth us how our years pass; that when we think of the old year, how soon it is gone, we may see upon what a whirling wheel we are set, which putteth us in mind every day of that last day which is coming for us, when we shall give account how every day was spent before it. So many years as are past, so many years we are nearer to the last; and though the old year be gone, and a new year come, yet whether another shall come after this, as this came after the former, no man, I think, hath

[1] For it was preached at the beginning of the year.

any promise of him that made time; for even these two days since the old year went out, many have gone the way which we all shall follow. Now, why days, or weeks, or years, but for us? But for man there should be no winter, no summer, no spring, no autumn; that we, seeing how the seasons are renewed, at last with them we may learn to renew ourselves; for to celebrate new years with old sins, is to let everything go before ourselves, and suffer the time to condemn us, which was given to save us. God hath shewed us new years, but he would have us shew him new men. This is God's new year's gift; not sheep, nor doves, nor fruits, which the Jews offered; neither myrrh, frankincense, and gold, which the Gentiles offered, Mat. ii., but a new creature, Gal. vi. 15. Therefore we must come to some schoolmaster, which teacheth us, like John Baptist, what we should do, that we may grow in knowledge, as we grow in years. 'Teach me to number my days,' saith Moses, 'that I may apply my heart to wisdom.' Whereby Moses telleth us, that this was one of his helps, which made him profit in the knowledge of God, to number his days. As a man that hath set a time for his task, listens to the clock, and counts his hours, so we have a set time to serve God. 'Work while it is day,' saith Christ, John ix. 4. What he doth mean by this, the apostle sheweth you, 'This is the day of salvation;' that is, this life is the day wherein you should work. What work have you to do? The apostle tells you, 'Work out your salvation.' This is a long task; therefore we had need to 'number our days,' and not lose a minute, lest we be benighted before our work be done. 'Teach me, O Lord, to number my days.' He which in the land of Midian learned to number sheep, now he is come into the wilderness, learneth to number his days: 'Teach us, O Lord, to number our days.' Not, Teach us the number of our days, for we shall quite forget it again; and the knowledge of times and course of seasons is the knowledge of God himself; but, 'Teach us to number our days;' that is, that we may be still numbering and counting our days, and hours, and minutes, to see how fast we die, that every day and hour we may learn something. As God hath numbered our days, so we must learn to number our days, or else it seems that we cannot 'apply our hearts to wisdom;' that is, unless we think upon death, we cannot fashion ourselves to a godly life, though we were as well instructed as Moses. This we find daily in ourselves, that the forgetfulness of death makes us to apply our hearts unto folly, and pleasure, and all voluptuousness; that, contrary to his advice, Work your salvation, we work our damnation. We are so far from numbering our days, that we do not

number our weeks, nor our months, nor our years; but as the apostle saith, 'A thousand years with God are as one day,' 2 Peter iii. 8, so one day with us is as a thousand years; that is, our time seems so long that we think we shall never die; but he which made this prayer is now dead, and the number of his days is ended, and nothing is left but his holy books which bring this prayer unto us, that we may learn to pray so too. Now, I must pray, 'Teach me, O Lord, to number *my* days;' and thou must pray, 'Teach me, O Lord, to number *my* days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom;' that is, so to pray, and fast, and watch, and hear, and do, as becometh him which shall shortly give account of his stewardship, Luke xvi. 2.

This is the fruit which comes to a man by numbering his days, God teacheth man to apply his heart to wisdom; and this is his lesson which he gives for that purpose, number thy days; that is, think that wisdom is a long study, and that thou hast but a short time to get it, and this will make thee get ground of virtue; for there is no such enemy to repentance, as to think that we have time enough to repent hereafter, which makes a man say, when any good motion cometh, Nay, I may stay yet, yet I may stay; like the sluggard which turns upon his bed like a door upon the hinges, and saith, 'Yet a little more, a little more sleep, a little more slumber,' I may lie still a while, Prov. vi. 10. This is not to number our days, but to stretch our days, and make them seem more than they are; and they that do so, never apply their hearts unto wisdom. So you see what a preservative Moses used against sin and pleasure; he kept a calendar as it were of his days, which called upon him, Be diligent, for thou hast but a short time.

Five things I note in these words: first, that death is the haven of every man; whether he sit in the throne, or keep in a cottage, at last he must knock at death's door, as all his fathers have done before him. Secondly, that man's time is set, and his bounds appointed, which he cannot pass, no more than the Egyptians could pass the sea; and therefore Moses saith, 'Teach us to number our days,' as though there were a number of our days. Thirdly, that our days are few, as though we were sent into this world but to see it; and therefore Moses, speaking of our life, speaks of days, not of years, nor of months, nor of weeks; but 'Teach us to number our days,' shewing that it is an easy thing ever for a man to number his days, they be so few. Fourthly, the aptness of man to forget death rather than anything else; and therefore Moses prayeth the Lord to teach him to number his days, as though they were still slipping out

of his mind. Lastly, that to remember how short a time we have to live, will make us apply our hearts to that which is good.

The first point is, that as every one had a day to come into this world, so he shall have a day to go out of this world. When Moses had spoken of some which lived seven hundred years, and other which lived eight hundred years, and other which lived nine hundred years, shewing that some had a longer time, and some a shorter, yet he speaks this of all, *mortuus est;* at last comes in *mortuus est*, that is, *he died*, which is the epitaph of every man. We are not lodged in a castle, but in an inn, where we are but guests, and therefore Peter calls us strangers, 1 Peter ii. 11. We are not citizens of the earth, but citizens of heaven, and therefore the apostle saith, 'We have here no abiding city, but we look for one to come,' Heb. xiii. 14. As Christ saith, 'My kingdom is not of this world,' John xviii. 36, so we may say, My dwelling is not in this world, but the soul soareth upward whence she came, and the body stoopeth downward whence it came; as the tabernacles of the Jews were made to remove, so our tabernacles are made to remove. Every man is a tenant at will, and there is nothing sure in life but death. As he which wrote this is gone, so I which preach it, and you which hear it, one coming in, and one going out, is to all. Although this is daily seen, yet it had need be proved, nay, every man had need to die, to make him believe that he shall die. When Adam and Eve became subject to death because of their sin, to teach them to think on death, so soon as they were thrust out of paradise, God clothed them with the skins of dead beasts, which shewed them that now they were clothed with death, and that as the beasts were dead whose skins they wore, so they should die also; therefore David saith, 'Man being in honour became like the beasts that perish,' Ps. xlix. 20. When he saith that he did become like the beasts which perish, he implieth that man should not perish like the beasts, but when he did like a beast, he died like a beast. From that day every man might say with Job, 'Corruption was my father, and the worm was my mother,' Job xvii. 14. For the rich glutton is locked in his grave as fast as poor Lazarus, Luke xvi. 22. Therefore God, speaking of kings, saith, 'I said ye are gods, but ye shall die like men.' If kings must die like men, then the expectation of men is dead; therefore when this king was ready to die, he said to Solomon, that he should go the way of all the earth, calling death the way of all the earth; to which Isaiah bears witness, crying, 'All flesh is grass,' Isa. xl. 6, that is, it falleth, and is cut down like grass. In paradise we might live or die, Gen. i. 27; in the world

we live and must die, Gen. iii. 21; in heaven we shall live and not die. Before sin nothing could change us; now everything doth change us; for when winter comes we are cold, when age comes we are withered, when sickness comes we are weak, to shew that when death comes we shall die. The clothes which we wear upon our backs, the sun which sets over our heads, the graves which lie under our feet, the meat which goes into our mouths, cry unto us that we shall wear, and fade, and die, like the fishes, and fowls, and beasts, which even now were living in their elements, and now are dead in our dishes. Every thing every day suffers some eclipse, and nothing stands at a stay, but one creature calls to another, Let us leave this world. Our fathers summoned us, and we shall summon our children to the grave; first we wax old, then we wax dry, then we wax weak, then we wax sick, and so we melt away by drops; at last, as we carried others, so others carry us unto the grave. This is the last bed which every man shall sleep in; we must return to our mother's womb. Therefore Jacob calleth his life but a pilgrimage; therefore Paul called his life but a race, 2 Tim. iv. 7; therefore David calleth himself but a worm, Ps. xxii. 6. A pilgrimage hath an end, a race hath a stop, a worm is but trodden under foot, and dead straight; so in an hour we are, and are not. Here we are now, and anon we are separated; and to-morrow one sickeneth, and the next day another sickeneth; and all that be here never meet again. We may well be called earthen vessels, 2 Cor. iv. 7, for we are soon broken; a spider is able to choke us, a pin is able to kill us, all of us are born one way, and die a hundred ways. As Elijah stood at the door of the cave when God passed by, 1 Kings xix. 9, so we stand in the passages of this world, ready to go out whensoever God shall call. We lose first our infancy, and then our childhood, and then our youth; at last, as we came in the rooms of others, so others come into our rooms. If all our days were as long as the day of Joshua, when the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, Joshua x. 13, yet it will be night at last, and our sun shall set like others. It is not long that we grow, but when we begin to fall, we are like the ice which thaweth sooner than it froze: so these little worlds are destroyed first, and at last the great world shall be destroyed too; for all which was made for us shall perish with us. What do you learn when you think of this, but that which Moses saith, to apply your hearts to wisdom? Death cometh after life, and yet guides to the whole life, like the stern of a ship; but for death there would be no rule, but every man's lust should be his law; he is like a king, which frighteth afar off, though he defer his sessions,

and stay the execution, yet the very fear that he will come makes the proudest peacock lay down his feathers, and is like a damp which puts out all the lights of pleasure.

The second note is, that the time of man is set, and his bounds appointed which he cannot pass; and therefore Moses prayeth the Lord that he would teach him to number his days; as though there were a number of our days: therefore God is called *Palmoni*,[1] which signifieth a secret numberer, because he knoweth the number of our days, which is secret to us. As it was said to Belshazzar, 'God hath numbered thy kingdom;' so it may be said to all, 'God hath numbered thy life.' To this Job bears witness, saying, 'Are not his days determined? thou hast appointed his bounds, which he cannot pass,' Job xiv. 5. Again Jeremiah saith, 'They could not stand, because the day of their destruction was come,' Jer. xlvi. 20. As there is a day of destruction, and a day of death, so there is a day of birth, a day of marriage, a day of honour, a day of deliverance. According to that the determination is made, Dan. xi. 36; that is, God hath determined all things. As God appointed a time when his Son should come into the world, Dan. ix. 25; and he came at the same time, as the prophets and evangelists accord, Gal. iv. 4; so he hath appointed a time when all his blessings shall come unto us, and they come at the same time. As we read of Joseph, when his appointed time came, Ps. cv. 19, shewing that God appointed a time when to exalt him, and before that time came he could not be exalted; therefore Christ saith so often, 'My time is not yet come,' John vii. 8, shewing that he knew the time of his baptizing, the time of his preaching, the time of his working, the time of his rising, and the time of his ascending. As for that which is objected of Hezekiah, because Isaiah shewed him that he should die, and after told him that fifteen years were added to his life, 2 Kings xx. 1, it is like the preaching of Jonas to the Ninevites, Jonah iii. 3, 'Forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed,' and yet Nineveh was not destroyed, because they repented; so Hezekiah was not abridged, because he repented. Therefore you must understand the phrase of God. As when we say that we shall journey to-morrow, we understand, if God will; so when God saith, I will destroy, he understands, if we persist. As all the promises of God are conditional, to take place if we repent, so all the threatenings of God are conditional, to take place if we repent not; and therefore sometime this word *if* is put in, as where there is no blessing nor cursing without an *if*. I may answer again, that God is a judge, and spake like a judge to Heze-

[1] See Dan. viii. 13, marginal rendering.—Ed.

kiah. A judge doth not condemn all whom he saith he will condemn, nor a schoolmaster beat every one whom he saith he will beat, to make him learn; yet the judge and schoolmaster doth not dissemble, but menace; this is not lying, but threatening. But you will say, If my time be set, thus long I shall live, and I cannot pass, then I will take no physic. You may as well say, I will take no meat. God hath not ordained the end without means, but the means as well as the end. If he have appointed one to die in his youth, he hath appointed some means to shorten his life, as he did Absalom's, 2 Sam. xviii. 6; if he have appointed one to live long, he hath appointed also some means to preserve his life, as Joseph cherished Jacob in his age. Therefore, though God had promised Paul that his company should not be drowned, yet he told the mariners that unless they kept in the ship they should be drowned, as if their safety should not be without means; but a good mind never quarrels about these things.

The third point is, that our life is but a short life. As many little skulls are in Golgotha as great skulls. For one apple that falleth from the tree, ten are pulled before they are ripe; and the parents mourn for the death of their children, as often as the children for the decease of their parents. This is our *April* and *May*, wherein we flourish; our *June* and *July* are next, when we shall be cut down. What a change is this, that within fourscore years not one of this assembly shall be left alive, but another preacher and other hearers shall fill these rooms, and tread upon us where our feet tread now!

The raven, and the phœnix, and the elephant, and the lion, and the hart, fulfil their hundreds, but man dieth when he thinks yet his sun riseth; before his eye be satisfied with seeing, or his ear with hearing, or his heart with lusting, death knocks at his door, and will not give him leave to meditate an excuse before he come to judgment. To shew the shortness of man's life, Moses used the shortest division in nature to express it by; he might have said, Teach me, O Lord, to number my months, or my years, but he speaks of days; so the Scripture is wont to number our life by days, and hours, and minutes, to shew us that we shall give account for hours as well as for days, for days as well as for weeks, for weeks as well as for months, for months as well as for years; which warneth us to make use of all our time, and every day to think upon the last.

This was the arithmetic of holy men in former times, to reckon their days, so that their time might seem short, to make them 'apply their hearts to wisdom.' The Hebrews did number their

days thus: first, they did deduct the time of sleep, so that if our years be threescore and ten, as the prophet saith, Ps. xc. 10, five and thirty of these years are stricken off at one blow, because we spend half our time in sleep; then they did deduct the time of youth, which Solomon calleth vanity, Eccles. xi. 10, as though it were not worthy to be called life, but vanity; then they did deduct the days of sorrow, because in sorrow a man had rather die than live. So, when the hours of sleep, and the hours of youth, and the hours of sorrow are taken away, what an epitome is man's life come to. The fathers used another account: first, they did deduct all the time which is past, for the time which is past is nothing; then they did deduct the time to come, because the time to come is uncertain, and no man can say that he shall live. Now, when the time past and the time to come is set aside, there is nothing left but the time present, that is, a moment, which is not so much in respect of eternity, as a little mote to the whole earth.

David numbered his days by a measure: 'My life,' saith he, 'is like a span long,' Ps. xxxix. 5. When he measured his life, he took not a pole, or an ell, nor a yard to measure it by, but a short measure, his short span, 'My life is like a span long.' Thus you have learned to number your days, or rather the hours of your days. As some came into the vineyard in the morning, and some at noon, and some at night, so some go out of this vineyard in the morning, some at noon, and some at night. Some men's life hath nothing but a morning, some have a morning and noon; he which liveth longest, liveth all the day, and therefore the youngest of all pray but for this day, and if he live till to-morrow, then he prayeth for that day, saying still, 'Give us *this day* our daily bread.' So that a pleasant life may be compared but to a glorious day, and a sorrowful life to a cloudy day, and a long life to a summer's day, and a short life to a winter's day. How comes it to pass, that when a man dies, all his years seem but so many days, and before he dies, all his days seem so many years? Job speaketh of all alike, 'Man which is born of a woman hath but a short time to live,' Job xiv. 1, Jacob was one hundred and thirty years old, and yet when he came before Pharaoh, he said, 'Few and evil have my days been.' Though Pharaoh did not speak of days, but asked him 'how old he was,' yet he answered of days, to shew that not only his years but his days were few. Our fathers, marvelling to see how suddenly men are, and are not, compared life to a dream in the night, to a bubble in the water, to a ship on the sea, to an arrow which never resteth till it fall, to a player which speaketh his part upon the stage, and

straight he giveth place to another; to a man which cometh to the market to buy one thing and sell another, and then is gone home again; so the figure of this world passeth away. This is our life; while we enjoy it, we lose it. As Jacob said that his days had been few, Gen. xlvii. 9, so we may say, that our days shall be few.

Now, why hath God appointed such a short time to man in this world? Surely, lest he should defer to do good, as his manner is; for though his life is so short, yet he thinks it too long to repent. The prophet saith, that 'our years are but threescore and ten,' Ps. xc. 10, as though this was but a little time to live. But why should we live so long? For if our life were but a year, yet a year is more than we use, all the rest is lost; for we defer till that week which we think will be last. It is said of the devil, that 'he is busy, because his time is short,' Rev. xii. 12; but the time of man is shorter, and therefore Christ saith, 'in this thy day,' Luke xix. 42, as though no day could be called thy day but this day; and therefore, all that thou hast to do, thou must do this day. Consider this, all which travel to heaven; had we not need to make haste, which must go such a long journey in such a short time? How can he choose but run, which remembereth that every day runneth away with his life?

The fourth point is our aptness to forget death rather than anything else; and therefore Moses prayeth the Lord to teach him to number his days, as though they were still slipping out of his mind. He which hath numbered our days, must teach us to number our days; for when Moses prayeth the Lord to teach him to number his days, he signifieth that he would very fain remember them, but still his mind did turn from them, and that he could not think upon them longer than he thought on the Lord, which taught him to number them. Such is the rebellion of our nature, we cannot remember that which we should, because we remember so many things which we should forget. How often doth the Scriptures call death to our minds! Yet we read how they put the day of death from them, and would not remember it, Amos vi. 1. Solomon bids us remember that we shall come to judgment, Eccles. xi. 9. And yet we read how they plead against the day of judgment, and syllogise to their sins, that 'all things shall continue as they be, because there hath been no change yet,' 2 Peter iii. 4. Even so it is with us. As 'the fool saith in his heart, There is no God,' Ps. xiv. 1, so we say in our hearts There is no death, or at least death will not come before we be old. Of all numbers we cannot skill to number our days. We can number our sheep, and our oxen, and our coin; but we think that our days are infinite, and therefore we never go about

to number them. We can number other men's days and years, and think they will die ere it be long, if we see them sick, or sore, or cold; but we cannot number our own. When two ships meet on the sea, they which are in one ship think that the other ship doth sail exceeding fast, but that their ship goeth fair and softly, or rather standeth still, although in truth one ship saileth as fast as the other; so every man thinks that the other post, and run, and fly to the grave, but that himself standeth stock still, although indeed a year with him is no longer than it is with the other. Beside that, we are given to forget death, we strive to forget it, like them which say, 'We may not remember,' Amos vi. 10.

*Teach me to number my days?* Nay, teach me to multiply my days. Teach me to remember death? Nay, teach me to prolong death; or, if I cannot prolong death, teach me to forget death, that I may sin without fear; for the remembrance of death maketh a man to sin fearfully, and takes away the pleasure of sin. Therefore, if ye mark, there is a kind of men which cannot abide to hear of death; they are sick of the name of it. The reason is, Ahab 'cannot abide Micaiah, because he never prophesied good unto him, but evil,' 1 Kings xxii.; so death never prophesied good to the wicked, but evil, for which they cannot abide it. Therefore, as Pharaoh bade Moses go out of his sight, so they bid death go out of their sight, and say when he comes, as Ahab said to Elijah, 'Art thou here, my enemy?' when they should say, Welcome, my friend. For as the devils thought Christ was come to torment them, so the ungodly think that death comes to torment them. Is it peace when they see death? They doubt it is not peace, because they never loved the God of peace. Oh that I could bring you into their hearts, that ye might see more than the tongue can express; for I do not think that any epicure, or worldling, or non-resident have any joy to think of death, or desire to be dissolved, but rather that he might never be dissolved; because death comes to the wicked like a jailor, which comes always to hale unto prison; therefore their care is not to remember death, '*that* they might apply their hearts to wisdom,' but to forget death, *lest* they should apply their hearts to wisdom, and lose their pleasures before the time; for he which is not purposed yet to leave his sins, would not be troubled with any thought that might make him take his pleasure fearfully, lest he should leave sin before sin leave him. Therefore the devil doth never teach a man to number his days, because he gains by the forgetfulness of death; but the Lord, which would have a man to apply his heart to wisdom, it is he which teacheth us to number our days; and

therefore Moses prayeth unto him. And because we pray not unto him, as he did, to teach us to number our days, therefore we die like worms before we be aware. So far we are from that which he shooteth at, to apply our heart to wisdom, that we are not in the way unto it; that is, to remember that we shall die.

The last point is the cause why Moses would learn to number his days, that he might apply his heart to wisdom; as if he should say, Until men think upon death, they never apply their hearts to wisdom, but busy themselves with worldly matters, as though they were feathering a nest that shall never be pulled down. Wisdom hath always carried that show of excellency, that the very wicked have laboured to put on this vizor. As we read of Pharaoh, who, to cover his foolishness, saith, 'Come, let us do wisely,' Exod. i. 10. And again, it is said that the Grecians sought after wisdom, 1 Cor. i. 22; even the nation which God calls the foolish nation, Deut. xxxii. 21, did seek after wisdom, that is, they would have the name of wisdom. But this wisdom, which Moses calls wisdom, is counted foolishness: 'The foolishness of preaching,' saith Paul, 1 Cor. i. 21, meaning how the foolish count preaching foolishness. Again, 'foolishness to the Gentiles,' meaning that the word of God seemeth like a foolish thing unto many. For that which Christ said unto Peter, he may say almost to all, 'They do not savour the things of God,' Mat. xvi. 23. As Anah devised a new creature, Gen. xxxvi. 24, so they have found out another wisdom, which is called the wisdom of the flesh, Rom. viii. 7. They remember, be 'wise as serpents,' Mat. x. 16; but they forget, be 'simple as doves.' He which is like to Ahithophel is counted a deep counsellor, 2 Sam. xvii. 7; he which is like Machiavel is counted a wise fellow. Alas, how easy a matter is it to deceive, and counterfeit, and play the subtle serpent, if a man would set his head into it! Could not David go as far as Ahithophel? Could not Paul shew as much cunning as Tertullus? Acts xxiv. 2. Yes, yes, if they were not taught to be simple as doves. But this wisdom comes not by the remembrance of death, but by the forgetfulness of death. Men do not use to think of death when they go about such matters, but say like the serpent, 'We shall not die,' Gen. iii. 4.

Two things I note in these words: first, that if we will find wisdom, we must apply our hearts to seek her; then, that the remembrance of death makes us apply our hearts unto it. Touching the first, Moses found some fault with himself, that for all that he had heard, and seen, and observed, and was counted wise, yet he was new to begin, and had not applied his heart to learn wisdom,

like the wise man, which saith, 'I am more foolish than any man; I have not the wisdom of a man in me,' Prov. xxx. 2. So insatiable and covetous, as I may say, are the servants of God, the more wisdom, and faith, and zeal they have, the more they desire. Moses speaketh of wisdom as if it were physic, which doth no good before it be applied; and the part to apply it to is the heart, where all man's affections are to love it and cherish it, like a kind of hostess. When the heart seeketh it findeth, as though it were brought unto her, like Abraham's ram. Therefore God saith, 'They shall seek me and find me, because they shall seek me with their hearts,' Jer. xxix. 13, as though they should not find him with all their seeking unless they did seek him with their heart. Therefore the way to get wisdom is to apply your hearts unto it, as if it were your calling and living, to which you were bound 'prentices. A man may apply his ears and his eyes as many truants do to their books, and yet never prove scholars; but from that day which a man begins to apply his heart unto wisdom, he learneth more in a month after than he did in a year before, nay, than ever he did in his life. Even as you see the wicked, because they apply their hearts to wickedness, how fast they proceed, how easily and how quickly they become perfect swearers, expert drunkards, cunning deceivers, so if ye could apply your hearts as thoroughly to knowledge and goodness, you might become like the apostle which teacheth you. Therefore, when Solomon sheweth men the way how to come by wisdom, he speaks often of the heart, as, 'Give thine heart to wisdom,' 'let wisdom enter into thine heart,' 'get wisdom,' 'keep wisdom,' 'embrace wisdom,' Prov. ii. 10, iv. 5, xiii. 8, as though a man went a-wooing for wisdom. Wisdom is like God's daughter, that he giveth to the man that loveth her, and sueth for her, and meaneth to set her at his heart. Thus we have learned how to apply knowledge that it may do us good; not to our ears, like them which hear sermons only, nor to our tongues, like them which make table-talk of religion, but to our hearts, that we may say with the virgin, 'My heart doth magnify the Lord,' Luke i., and the heart will apply it to the ear and to the tongue, as Christ saith, 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,' Mat. xii. 34.

The last point is, that the remembrance of death makes us to apply our hearts to wisdom. Moses commended not many books to a wise man learned, but, as David commends one book instead of many: 'Meditate in the law of God day and night,' Ps. i. 2, for 'the reading of many books,' saith Solomon, 'is but weariness to the flesh,' Eccles. xii. 12; therefore, as though Moses

had marked what did move him most to seek after God, he prayeth that that thought may run in his mind still, the remembrance of death. As many benefits come unto us by death, so many benefits come unto us by the remembrance of death; and this is one; it maketh a man to apply his heart to wisdom; for when he considereth that he hath but a short time to live, he is careful to spend it well, like Moses, of whom it is said, that when he considered how he had but a season to live, he 'chose rather to suffer afflictions with the servants of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season,' Heb. xi. 25. This is that which makes the old men fast, and watch, and prepare themselves more than young, because they think themselves nearer the door, like old Isaac, which, when he was blind for age, said unto Esau, 'Behold I am now old, and know not the day of my death,' Gen. xxvii. 2; that is, because I am old, I look to die shortly. And therefore, as Isaiah taught Hezekiah to set all things in order before he died, 2 Kings xx. 1, so he called his eldest son, to whom he thought that his inheritance belonged, that he might bless him before he died. This wisdom the fathers called the wisdom of the cross, which we call the best, because it was dearest bought. It is hard for a man to think of a short life, and think evil, or to think of a long life, and think well. Therefore when Jeremiah had numbered all the calamities and sins of the Jews, at the last he imputed all to this, She remembered not her end,' Lam. i. 9; so if I may judge why natural men care for nothing but their pomp, why great men care for nothing but their honour and dignity, why covetous worldlings care for nothing but their gain, why voluptuous epicures care for nothing but their pleasure, I may say with Jeremiah, They remember not their end. We never covet the same things living and dying; therefore when Solomon had spoken of all the vanities of men, at last he opposeth this *memorandum* as a counterpoise against them all, 'Remember that for all these things thou shalt come to judgment,' Eccles. xi. 9, as if he should say, Men would never speak as they speak, nor do as they do, if they did but think that these speeches and deeds should come to judgment. As the bird guideth her flight with her train, so the life of man is best directed with a continual recourse unto his end. The thought of death hath made many sins avoid, like the devil when Christ alleged scripture; it is like a strainer, all the thoughts, and speeches, and actions which come through it, are cleansed and purified like a cloth which cometh out of the water.

Seeing then that so much fruit grows of one stalk, which is the

numbering of our days, let us consider what an harvest we have lost, which haply before this day never prayed with Moses, that the Lord would teach us to number our days. What if we had died in the days of our ignorance, like Judas, which hanged himself before he could see the passion, or resurrection, or ascension of Christ? But God hath cared for us more than we have cared for ourselves. We should have numbered our days and sins too; but, alas, how many days have we spent, and yet never thought why any day was given us! But as the old year went, and a new year came, so we thought that a new would follow that, and so we think that another will come after this; and so they thought which are dead already. This is not to number our days, but to provoke God to shorten our days. There are few here which have not seen twenty years; now if we had but every year learned one virtue since we were born, we might by this time have been like saints among men; but the time is yet to come, when we must apply our hearts to wisdom. To riches and pleasures we have applied our hearts, and our eyes, and our ears, and our hands too; but to wisdom we have not applied our hearts.

There be many causes, but there should be no cause if we had numbered our days. For surely if a man could persuade himself that this is his last day, as it may be, he would not defer his repentance until to-morrow; if he could think that this is his last meal that ever he shall eat, he would not surfeit; if he could believe that the words which he doth speak to-day, should be the last that ever he should speak, he would not offend with his tongue; if he could be persuaded that this sermon should be the last sermon that ever he should hear, he would hear it better than ever he heard any yet. Yet breath is in the body, and the heart may apply itself, and the eye may apply itself, and the ear may apply itself, and the hand may apply itself; work while it is light. I can but teach you with words, as John baptized with water. As Moses prayed the Lord to teach him to number his days, so you must pray the Lord to teach you to number your days. And now I lead you to number your days. It may be that thou hast but twenty years to serve God; wilt thou not live twenty years like a Christian, that thou mayest live a thousand years like an angel? It may be that thou hast but ten years to serve him; wilt thou not serve ten years for heaven, which wouldst serve twenty years for a farm? It may be that thou hast but five years to serve God; wilt thou not spend five years well, to redeem all thy years for five? Yet God doth know whether many here have so long to repent for all the years which they

have spent in sin. If thou wert born but to-day, thy journey is not an hundred years; if thou be a man, half thy time is spent already; if thou be an old man, then thou art drawing to thy inn, and thy race is but a breath; therefore, as Christ said unto his disciples when he found them sleeping, 'Could ye not watch one hour?' so I say to myself, and to you, Can we not pray? Can we not suffer a little while? He which is tired can crawl a little way, a little further, one step more for a kingdom. For this cause God would not have men know when they shall die, because they should make ready at all times, having no more certainty of one hour than another. Therefore our Saviour saith, 'Watch,' because you know not when the Lord will come to take you, or to judge you; 'Happy are they which hear the word and keep it.' Thus you see that death is the last upon earth, that the time of man is set, that his race is short, that he thinks not of it, that if he did remember it, it would make him apply his mind to good, as he doth to evil. And now I end as I began, 'The Lord teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.' Amen.

# NOAH'S DRUNKENNESS.

IN TWO SERMONS.

# NOAH'S DRUNKENNESS.

## THE FIRST SERMON.

*Noah also began to be a husbandman, and planted a vineyard: and he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and was uncovered in the midst of his tent.*—GEN. IX. 20, 21.

FIRST, we are to speak of Noah; then of Ham, his wicked son; and after of Shem and Japhet, his good sons. In Noah first, of that which he did well, and then of his sin; in Ham, first of his sin, and then of his curse; in his brethren, first of their reverence and then of their blessing.

Now we will speak of the father, and after of his children. Then (saith Moses) that 'Noah began to be an husbandman.'

This is the first name which is given to Noah after the flood, he is called a husbandman; and the first work which is mentioned was the planting of a vineyard. One would think, when all men were drowned with the flood, and none left alive to possess the earth but Noah and his sons, that he should have found himself something else to do than to plant vineyards; and that the Holy Ghost should have entitled him king of the world, and not a husbandman of the earth, seeing there be no such men as Noah was, which had more in his hand than any king hath in the world, or shall have to the world's end; but thereby the Holy Ghost would shew, that God doth not respect kings for their titles, nor men for their riches, as we do, and therefore he nameth Noah, after the work which he did, not after the possessions which he had, an husbandman.

It seemeth that there was great diversity between this age and [illegible]s; for if we should see now a king go to plough, a nobleman

to drive the team, a gentleman keep sheep, he would be scorned for his labour, more than Noah was for drunkenness; yet when we read how this monarch of the world thought no scorn to play the husbandman, we consider not his princely calling, nor his ancient years, nor his large possessions, to commend his industry, or modesty, or lowly mind therein: which may teach us humility, though we learn to disdain husbandry. Of whom will we learn to be humble, if kings give example, and the Son of God humbleth himself from heaven to earth? And yet we contemn the example of the kings of the earth, and the example of the King of heaven.

The time was when Adam digged and delved, and David kept sheep, and all the house of Jacob were called 'men occupied about cattle;' but as they for this were abominable to the Egyptians (as Moses saith in the same verse), so they which do like them are abhorred of their brethren, and they which live by them scorn them for their works, which would be chastened themselves because they work not.

There was no art nor science which was so much set by in former times, and is now profitable to the commonwealth, bringing less profit unto herself, that may so justly complain of her fall without cause, and her despite from them that live by her, as this painful science of husbandry; that it is marvel that any man will take the pain for the rest, to be contemned for his labour, and be a scorn for the rest, which might hunger and starve, if he did not labour for them more than they do for themselves. No marvel then though many in the poor countries murmur and complain, that other cannot live by them, and they cannot live themselves; but if is marvel if their complaints do not grow in time to rebellion, and pull others as low as themselves; for why should the greatest pain yield the less profit? Yet this is their case; for if you mark, you shall see that the husbandman doth bate the price of his fruits so soon as the dearth is past, though he raiseth it a little while that dearth lasteth; but they which raise the price of their wares with him, seldom fall down, but make men pay as dear when the dearth is past, as if it were a dearth still. Thus a plentiful year doth damage him, and a hard year doth advantage them. So this painful man is fain to live poorly, fare meanly, go barely, house homely, rise early, labour daily, sell cheap, and buy dear, that I may truly say, that no man deserveth his living better, no man fulfilleth the law better,—that is, 'Thou shalt get thy living in the sweat of thy brow,'—than this poor son of Adam, which picks his crumbs out of

the earth. Therefore he should not be mocked for his labour, which hath vexation enough, though all men speak well of him. And in my opinion, if any deserve to be loved for his innocency, or for his truth, or his pain, or the good which he brings to the commonwealth, this realm is not so much beholden to any sort of men (but those that feed the soul), as those that feed the body, that is, those that labour the earth. Yet you see how they live like drudges, as though they were your servants to provide food for you, and after to bring it to your doors; as the beasts serve them, so they serve you, as though you were another kind of men. I cannot think upon their misery, but my thoughts tell me, that it is a great part of our unthankfulness, that we never consider what an easy life and living God hath given unto us in respect of them.

If the apostle's rule were kept, 'they which do not work should not eat;' but now they which do not work eat most, and the husbandmen which work eat not, but are like bees, which provide food for others, and pinch themselves. Let us consider this, for they had not one law and we another, but the same curse which was denounced upon Adam was denounced upon all his children, that every man should get his living in the sweat of his brows. Although I know there be divers works, and divers gifts, and divers callings to work in; yet always provided they which do not work should not eat, for in the sweat of thy brows, that is, in labour and travail, thou king, and thou judge, and thou prelate, and thou landlord, and thou gentleman, shalt get thy living, as Adam thy father did, or else thou dost avoid the curse, and a greater curse shall follow; that is, they which will not sweat on earth shall sweat in hell.

Adam had food as well as thou, and so had Noah, and more than thou, unless thou hadst all, for they had all; and yet they might not be idle, because their hands were not given them for nothing. Some work with their pen; some with their tongues; some with their fingers: as nature hath made nothing idle, but that he which is a magistrate, should do the work of a magistrate; he which is a judge, should do the work of a judge; he which is a captain, should do the work of captain; he which is a minister, should do the work of a minister; as when Noah was called a husbandman, he did the work of an husbandman. This contempt of the country doth threaten danger to the land, as much as anything else in our days, unless their burden be eased, and their estimation qualified in some part to their pains. Thinking that you have not heard of this theme before, seeing the words of my text did lie for it, thus much

I have spoken to put you in mind how easily you live in respect of them, and to rectify our minds towards our poor brethren, which indeed seem too base in our eyes, and are scorned for their labours, as much as we should be for our idleness.

*Then*, saith Moses, *Noah began to be an husbandman.* In that it is here said that Noah began, it doth not disprove that he gave not himself to husbandry before, but it importeth that Noah began to set up husbandry again after the flood before any other. So this good man, recomforted with the experience of God's favour (which had exempted him and his seed out of the world), and rejoicing to see the face of the earth again, after the waters were gone, though an old man, and weaker than he was, yet he turned to his labour afresh, and scorned not to till and plant for all his possessions, as though he were an husbandman. Such a lowliness is always joined with the fear of God; and they that are humbled with religion, do not think themselves too good to do any good thing.

Here note by the way, that none of Noah's sons are said to begin this work, but Noah himself; the old man, the hoary head, and careful father begins to teach the rest, and shews his sons the way how they should provide for their sons, and how all the world after should labour and travail, till they return to dust. So the old man, whom age dispenseth withal to take his ease, is more willing to provide for the wants of his children, than they are which are bound to labour for themselves and their parents too; as the stork doth feed the dam when she is old, because the dam fed her when she was young. What a shame is this to Shem and Japhet, that is, to us which are young and strong, that the father should be called a labourer, when the sons stand by! Now the ground was barren because of the flood, and could not bring forth fruit of itself because of the curse; therefore it pitied Noah to see the desolation, and barrenness, and slime upon the face of the earth, which he had seen so glorious, and sweet, and fertile, with all manner of herbs, and fruits, and flowers before. Therefore he setteth himself to manure it, which waited for nothing now, but a painful labourer to till and dress it, that it might bring forth delights and profits for sinful man, as it did before.

By this we may learn to use all means for the obtaining of God's blessings, and not to lose anything which we might have or save for want of pains; for that is sin, as Solomon noteth in Prov. xxiv., when he reproveth the slothful husbandman, because his field brought forth nettles and thistles, instead of grapes, not because the ground would not bear grapes, but because the slothful man

would not set them. Shall God command the earth and all his creatures to increase for us, and shall not we further their increase for ourselves? As we increase and multiply ourselves, so we are bound to join hand and help, that all creatures may increase and multiply too, or else the fathers should eat the children's portion, and in time there would be nothing left for them that come after. This regard Noah seemeth to leave unto his posterity, and therefore he gave himself unto husbandry, which is commended in him unto this day, and shall be recorded of him so long as this book is read; whereby we are warned, that he which liveth only to himself, is not to be remembered of them which live after. But as David cared how the realm should be governed after his death, as well as he did during his life, so though we die and depart this world, yet we should leave that example, or those books, or those works behind us, which may profit the church and commonwealth, when we are dead and buried, as much as we did when we lived among them; even as Noah planted a vineyard, not for himself, but for the ages to come after.

Some do think that Noah planted the first vineyard, and drank the first wine, and that there was no use of grapes before; which opinion they are led unto, that they might excuse Noah, and mitigate his fault if he did sup too deep of that cup, the strength and operation whereof was not known unto him, nor unto any man before. But it is not like that the excellent liquor and wholesome juice of the grape did lie hid from the world so many hundred years; and no doubt but there were vines from the beginning, and created with other trees; for how could Noah plant a vineyard unless he had slips of other vines, or grapes that grew before, seeing he did not create fruits, but plant fruits as we do. For this is principally to be noted, that so soon as he had opportunity to do good, he omitted no time, but presently after the flood was gone, and that the earth began to dry, he plied it with seeds, and wrought it till he saw the fruits of his labour. By this we learn to omit no occasion to do good, but whensoever we may do good, to count it sin if we do it not.

But if we be so exercised, then all our works shall prosper like the vineyard of Noah; because the fruit of the vine doth cheer the countenance and glad the heart of man. Therefore some have gathered upon the planting of this vineyard a signification of gladness and thankfulness in Noah for his late deliverance, and the Jews by their solemn feasts did celebrate the memorial of some great benefit; but I rather judge that God would have us see in this

example what men did in these days, and how we are degenerate from our parents, that we may prepare against the fire, as Noah prepared against the water.

This is worthy to be noted too: God did not so regard his husbandry but that he had an eye to his drunkenness, and speaks of his fault as well as his virtue; whereby we are warned that though God bless us now while we remember him, yet he will chasten us so soon as we forget him; though we be in a good name now, infamy will rise in an hour; though we be rich at this present, poverty may come presently; though we be whole while we be here, yet we may fall sick before night, even as Noah is praised in one verse and dispraised in another verse. Even now God commendeth him for his lowliness, and now discommendeth him for his drunkenness, as though he had forgotten all his righteousness so soon as he had sinned, and would call in his praise again.

This was to shew that Noah was not saved from the flood because he deserved to be saved, but because God had favour unto him, for he which was not drowned with water was after drowned with wine. As the Pharisees when they had done well were proud of it, and lost their reward, so when Noah had done a good work, he spotted it with sin, and was dispraised where he was praised, as though God had repented him that he commended him. He planted well, but he drank not well; therefore that which was good did him hurt. Then seeing he was trapped with a good work, whatsoever we do we may remember how easy it is to sin, if we miss in the matter, or in the manner, or time, or place, or the measure, as Noah did. He which planted the vineyard is worthy to taste of the grape; but if thou have found honey, saith Solomon, eat not too much lest thou surfeit. So if thou hast found wine, drink not too much lest thou surfeit. A little wine is better than a great deal, and if thou wilt follow the apostle's counsel, thou must drink it but for thy stomach's sake, lest that happen to thee which thou shalt hear of this noble patriarch.

Though he were never so righteous before God and men, though he escaped the destruction which lighted upon all the world, though he had all the fowls of the air and beasts of the land at his command, though he passed the pilgrimage of man nine hundred years, yet Noah was but a man, so ancient, so righteous, so mighty, so happy. Noah shewed himself but a man, for, drinking the wine which himself had planted, he was drunken. This was Noah's fault, he was drunken with his own wine, as Lot was defiled with his own daughters. If Ham his son had taken too much, and

stripped himself as his father did, the Holy Ghost would scarce have spoken of it, because he was a man of no note; but when the father forgat himself, and gave his offence, mark the manner of the Holy Ghost, as though he would shew you a wonder; he displayeth Noah's drunkenness, as Ham displayed his nakedness, as if he would say, Come and see the strength of man! He which was counted so righteous, he which believed the threatening, like Lot, when the rest mocked, he to whom all the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the earth, flocked in couples as they came to Adam, he which was reserved to declare the judgments of God, and to begin the world again; Noah, the example of sobriety, the example of moderation, is overcome with drink, as if he had never been the man. How easy, how quickly the just, the wise, the prudent, hath lost his sense, his memory, his reason, as though he had never been the man!

And how hard is it to avoid sin, when occasion is at hand, and pleasant opportunity tempteth to sin! It is easier for the bird to go by the net than to break the net; so it is easier for a man to avoid temptations than to overcome temptations. Therefore God forbade Balaam, not only to curse the people as Balak would have him, but he forbade him to go with Balak's servants, knowing that if he went with them, and saw the pomp of the court, and heard the king himself speak unto him, and felt the tickling reward, it would strain his conscience, and make him doubt whether he should curse or bless.

Peter but warming himself at Caiaphas's fire, was overcome by a silly damsel to do that which he never thought, even to forswear his Lord God. Therefore Daniel would not eat of the king's meat, lest he should be tempted to the king's will, shewing us that there is no way to escape sin, but to avoid occasion. Therefore David prayeth, 'Turn away mine eyes from vanity,' as though his eyes would draw his heart, as the bait tilleth on the hook. Noah thought to drink, he thought not to be drunk; but as he which cometh to the field to sound the trumpet is slain as soon as he which cometh to fight, so the same wine distempereth Noah which hath distempered so many since. Where he thought to take his reward, and taste of the fruit of his own hands, God set an everlasting blot upon him, which sticks fast till this day, like a bar in his arms, so long as the name of Noah is spoken of, that we cannot read of his virtue, but we must read of his sin; whereby every man is warned to receive the gifts of God reverently, to use them soberly, and to sanctify himself before he reach forth his hand unto them,

that they may comfort and profit us, with that secret blessing which God hath hid in them; or else everything, the best gifts of God may hurt us, as the pleasant wine stained and confounded the great patriarch, when he delighted too much in it, which he might have drunk as Christ did at his last supper, and this disgrace had never been written in his story. But God would have a fearful example, like the pillar of salt, to stand before those beasts, whose only strife is to make trial who can quaff deepest, and shew all their valiantness in wine.

Because there is such warning before us, now we have the drunkard in schooling, I will spend the time that is left to shew you the deformity of this sin. If any hear me which have been overtaken with it, let them not marvel why he cannot love his enemies, which loveth such an enemy as this, which leadeth till he reeleth, dulls him till he be a fool, and steals away his sense, his wit, his memory, his health, his credit, his friends, and when she hath stripped him as bare as Noah, then she exposeth him like Noah to Ham, and all that see him do mock him. It is a wonder almost that any man would be drunk that hath seen a drunkard before, swelling, and puffing, and foaming, and spewing, and grovelling like a beast; for who would be like a beast for all the world? Look upon the drunkard when his eyes stare, his mouth drivels, his tongue falters, his face flames, his hands tremble, his feet reel, how ugly, how monstrous, how loathsome doth he seem to thee? So loathsome dost thou seem to others when thou art in like taking.

And how loathsome, then, dost thou seem to God? Therefore, the first law that Adam received of God was abstinence, which, if he had kept, he had kept all virtues beside; but intemperance lost all. In abstinence the law came to Moses; and he fasted when he received it, to shew that they which receive the word of God, receive it soberly. A temperate man seldom sinneth, because the flesh, which doth tempt, is mortified, lest it should tempt; but when the handmaid is above the mistress, and a man hath lost the image of God, and scarce retaineth the image of man, all his thoughts and speeches, and actions, must needs be sin, and nothing but sin, because the band of virtue, sobriety, is broken, which kept all together. When didst thou want discretion to consider? When didst thou want patience to forgive? When didst thou want heart to pray, but when sobriety was fled away, and intemperancy filled her room? If shame let to sin, it casteth out shame; if fear let to sin, it casteth out fear; if love let to sin, it expulseth love; if know-

ledge let to sin, it expulseth knowledge, like a covetous landlord which would have all to himself and dwell alone.

There is no sin but hath some show of virtue; only the sin of drunkenness is like nothing but sin. There is no sin but, although it hurt the soul, it beautifieth the body, or promiseth profit, or pleasure, or glory, or something to his servants; only drunkenness is so impudent, that it descrieth itself; so unthankful, that it maketh no recompence; so noisome, that it consumeth the body, which maketh sinners spare, lest they should appear to be sinners. Every sin defileth a man, but drunkenness maketh him like a beast; every sin defaceth a man, but drunkenness taketh away the image of a man; every sin robbeth a man of some virtue, but drunkenness stealeth away all virtues at once; every sin deserveth punishment, but drunkenness upbraids a man while the wine is in the stomach. And though he would dissemble his drunkenness, yet he is not able to set a countenance of it, but the child descrieth him; the fool knows that he is drunk, because his face betrayeth him, like the leprosy which brast out of the forehead; so worthily hath he lost his opinion of sobriety which hath lost itself. His son thinks himself more master now than his father; his servant makes him a fool; his children lead him like a child; his wife useth him like a servant. And although his drunkenness leaveth him when he hath slept, yet no man seeks to him for counsel after, no man regards his word, no man reckons of his judgment, no man is persuaded by his counsel, no man accounts of his learning, no man hath any glory to accompany with him, but so soon as drunkenness hath made him like a beast, every man abhorreth him like a beast, as they did Nebuchadnezzar; the Spirit flieth from him, lest he should grieve it; his friends go away, lest he should shame them; and no virtues dare còme near, lest he should defile them.

How many things fly out when wine goes in! How is it then that he which loveth himself can be so cruel to himself, that he should love his life, and shorten his life; that he should love his health, and destroy his health; that he should love his strength, and weaken his strength; that he should love his wealth, and consume his wealth; that he should love his credit, and crack his credit; that he should love his understanding, and overturn his understanding; that he should love his beauty, and deform his beauty? The poets need feigning no more, that men are transformed into beasts, for if they were living now, they should see men like beasts; some like lions, some like wolves, some like foxes, some like bears, some like swine. Who is the beast, when the beasts satisfy nature, and man

satisfieth appetite; when the beasts keep measure, and man exceeds measure? When the beasts are found labouring, and man found surfeiting, who is the beast? I have read of a bird which hath the face of a man, but is so cruel of nature, that sometimes for hunger she will set upon a man and slay him; after, when she comes for thirst unto the water to drink, seeing the face in the water like the face of him whom she devoured, for grief that she had killed one like herself, takes such sorrow, that she never eateth nor drinketh after, but beats, and frets, and pines herself to death. What wilt thou do then, which hast not slain one like thyself, but thyself, thy very self, with a cup of wine, and murderest so many virtues and graces in one hour?

As Esau sold his land and living for a mess of pottage, so the drunkard selleth his sense, and wit, and memory, and credit, for a cup of wine. Thou hast not murdered thy brother like Cain, but thou hast murdered thyself like Judas. As the Rechabites abstaining from wine, as Jonadab bid them, obtained the blessing which God had appointed to the Israelites; so let us take heed lest they which we account idolaters, whilst they fast and watch, obtain the blessing which God hath appointed for us, get away the blessings, while we sit down to eat, and rise to play. Therefore, as Christ said, 'Remember Lot's wife,' so I say, Remember Lot; one hour of drunkenness did him more hurt than all his enemies in Sodom. Remember Noah; one hour of drunkenness discovered that which was hid six hundred years. Ten times more might be said against this vice; but if I have said enough to make you abhor it, I have had as much as I would.

Some go about to excuse Noah, because he was an old man, and therefore might soon be taken cup-shot. Some because the wines were hotter in those countries than they are with us. Some because of his change of drinks, which had not wonted himself to wine before. Some because, as most men delight in that which by great labour they have brought to pass of themselves, so no marvel though Noah had a longing to his own grapes, following herein the example of a curious cook, which doth sup and sup his broth, to taste whether it be well seasoned, that he may mend it, if he can, or mend the next; but as the fly, by often dallying with the candle, at last scorcheth her wings with the flame, so taking, he was taken, and at last was drunk. Yet this is imputed to him for his fault, that he was drunk, as the punishment which follows doth witness. Such is the providence of God, that his mercy might be glorified in all. He hath concluded all under sin, and

suffered the best to fall, that no man might trust in his own strength; and that we, seeing their repentance, may learn to rise again, how grievous soever our sins be. If we have been idolaters, if adulterers, if persecutors, if murmurers, if murderers, if blasphemers, if drunkards; Aaron and Moses, and Lot and Abraham, and David and Solomon, and Peter and Paul, and Noah, have been the like, who reign now in the kingdom of Christ with his angels; and so may we, if we repent like them. These examples, saith Paul, are not written for our imitation, but for our admonition.

Thus you have seen Noah sober, and Noah drunken; whereby you may see that a man may be drunk with his own wine, he may surfeit with his own meats, he may lust with his own wife, he may offend with his own gifts, his own honour may make him proud, his own riches may make him covetous, his own strength may make him venturous, his own wit may make him contentious. Therefore, as the child plucks out the sting before he takes the honey, so let every man, before he receives the gifts of God, sit down and look what baits, what snares, what temptations Satan hath hid in them, and when he hath taken out the sting, then eat the honey, and he shall use the blessings of Christ, as Christ did himself.

# A GLASS FOR DRUNKARDS.

## THE SECOND SERMON.

*And when Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, he told his two brethren without. Then took Shem and Japheth a garment, and put it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father, with their faces backward: so they saw not their father's nakedness. Then Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. He said moreover, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant. God persuade Japheth that he may dwell in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant, &c.*—GEN. IX. 21–27.

YOU have here the story of Noah and his sons. As Noah did well and evil, so he had good sons and evil; but as his virtues were more notorious than his vices, so God blessed him more than he crossed him; for he had two good sons, and but one evil son; his good sons were Shem and Japhet, his wicked son was Ham; his good sons were blessed, his wicked son was cursed. First, of the father, and then of his sons. In Noah, first you see his husbandry, and then his drunkenness, and after his nakedness. In Ham, first you see his mockery, and after his curse; in Shem and Japhet, first you see their reverence, and after their blessing.

Of Noah's drunkenness and his husbandry we have spoken; now a word of his nakedness. 'Drinking of the wine, he was drunk, and was uncovered in the midst of his tent,' &c. It is said that drunken porters keep open gates; so when Noah was drunken, he set all open. As wine went in, so wit went out; as wit went out, so his

clothes went off. Thus Adam, which began the world at first, was made naked with sin, Gen. iii.; and Noah, which began the world again, is made naked with sin, to shew that sin is no shrouder, but a stripper. This is one fruit of the vine more than Noah looked for; instead of being refreshed and comforted, he was stripped and scorned.

There is a thing which followeth sin, which Job calleth a rod, Job ix. 34, xxi. 9, which the sinner never thinketh of, before he have done. When the child hath faulted, then he is beaten; so now Noah hath sinned, he must be beaten; first he is stripped naked, after he is scourged; wine putteth off his clothes, and then Ham cometh and lasheth him; to shew that wine can both cheer the heart and grieve the heart. As the forbidden tree, when it promised our parents knowledge, took their knowledge from them, Gen. iii. 3, so every sin giveth other wages than it promiseth. Little thought Noah that wine would make him naked; but now he is naked and stripped too, as though he were first stripped, and then whipped. He which believed the threatening (like Lot) when others mocked, Gen. xix.; he which escaped the flood when others were drowned; he to whom all the fowls of the air and the beasts of the earth flocked in couples, as they did to Adam, Gen. ii.; he which was reserved to declare the judgments of God, and begin the world again; Noah, the example of temperance, the example of moderation, the example of sobriety, lieth naked in his tent for drinking the wine which he himself had planted. The operation of wine was drunkenness, the sequel of drunkenness was nakedness, the effect of nakedness was derision. As the serpent's sting is in his tail, so the end of sin is bitterness. Lest he should love the vice wherewith he was once defiled (as they which are once drunk hardly get out of the cellar), God giveth him a *memorandum*, like Jacob's limping, that he was never drunken after, but learned temperance of intemperance; therefore it is good a little to feel the sting of sin, that we may handle it like a hornet.

Now when Noah the father was drunken, Ham the son becometh a scorner; the father deserved to be despised of his son, because he had disfigured the image of a father. Therefore followeth, 'When Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, he told his two brethren without,' &c. Drunkenness was his fault, and shame must be his punishment. Whereby you may note, how God doth proportionate and match sins and punishments together, that a man may look upon his punishment like a glass and see his sin. Again,

by this you may see how God doth bring forth the faults of the just, as well as the unjust; or else others would say as Christ saith, John viii., 'Who can accuse me of sin?' What a grief was this to David, that his son should be his traitor! So to increase the grief of Noah, his son was his scorner. He may say as the psalmist saith, Ps. lv. 12, 'It is thou, O man! even my companion and familiar, which delighted together.' If mine enemy had defamed me, I could have borne it, or I would have fled from him; but he whom I have loved, nay, he whom I have brought into the world, made me a shame to the world, like the viper, which killeth the dam that beareth it. So oftentimes the prophecy of Micah proveth true, 'A man's enemies are they of his own house,' chap. vii. 6; as Judas betrayed his Master.

Who can reclaim a wicked disposition? How deep was the root of evil hid in his heart, that Noah could never know it before he shewed it! Until now, Ham seemed as good as Shem; and if Japhet had said, Thou shalt be cursed, he would have said, *Thou* shalt be cursed. Hypocrisy is spun with such fine thread, that we may live as long with a man as Noah did with Ham, and scarce discern him.

Here are two sins which go before Ham's curse: one, that he did see his father's nakedness; the other, that he did reveal it unto his brethren.

When he saith that 'Ham saw his father's nakedness,' he meaneth that he looked upon it with a pleasure, as David did upon the nakedness of Bathsheba, 2 Sam. xi.; for he might have seen it by chance, and not offended, as a man seeth an image and detesteth it.

The Edomites are reproved for looking upon the affliction of their brethren, because they rejoiced to see it, Obad. 11; but the friends of Job looked upon his afflictions, and are not reproved, because they sorrowed to see his sorrows. Therefore Ham did not sin in seeing, but in gazing and rejoicing, like the Edomites.

There is a wise eye, and there is a foolish eye, Eccles. ii. 14. The wise eye is like the bee, which gathereth honey of every weed; the foolish eye is like the spider, which gathereth poison of every flower. Therefore God licensed Abraham to see the flames of Sodom, which he forbade Lot, because that which teacheth one tempteth another. It is a true proverb, The eye is a shrew; although it shew light, yet it leadeth many into darkness. If Eve had not seen, she had not lusted; for it is said, 'Seeing that the tree was pleasant to the eye, she took and ate,' Gen. iii. 6. If Achan had not seen, he had not stolen; for he saith, first I saw, and then I coveted, Josh. vii. 21.

If David had not seen, he had not lusted; for it is said first, that he did see her, and then he sent for her, 2 Sam. xi. 2. So when Ham had seen the temptation, he was snared with the sin; therefore it followeth, 'He told his brethren which were without,' &c. Thus sin groweth of sin, from the eye to the heart, and from the heart to the tongue. A man may go into a labyrinth easily; but when he is in he cannot get out; so Ham did see a temptation easily, but when he had seen it, he could not look from it. Therefore when Isaiah speaketh of vanity, he named 'cart-ropes of vanity,' Isa. v. 18, to shew how one sin draweth another, as it were with cart-ropes, and one sinner maketh another, as Eve did Adam, Gen. iii. When Satan was cast out himself, he sought ever after whom he might devour, 1 Pet. v. 8; so when Ham had strained reverence himself, he laboured to bring his brethren into the same disobedience. All men seek after fellows, and we think it evil to be evil alone; therefore the thieves, before they go to steal, call their mates, and say, 'Come with us,' Prov. i. 10. 'It is enough,' saith Peter, 'that we have spent our former time in lust,' 1 Pet. iv. 3; so it was enough that Ham had faulted himself, but when he had seen, he would have his brethren see too; when he was become a scorner, he would have his brethren scorn too; therefore, as Andrew called Simon, and Philip called Nathanael, to see the Son of God, so Ham called his brethren to see the nakedness of his father. The sins of men are like a plume of feathers; for itching ears and an evil disposition breedeth an evil suspicion; therefore Ham, thinking that his brethren had been as shameless as himself, thought this a merry May-game to make them sport. Come with me, saith he, and I will shew you my father naked. They say it is an evil bird which will defile his own nest; so it is an evil son that will shame his own father. He should have covered his father's nakedness so soon as he saw it, lest his brethren should see it too; but he was ready to make it worse, like them which hear a suspicion and make it a report. He should have taken the beam out of his own eye, when he spied a mote in his father's eye; but as the eye seeth all things and cannot see itself, so we can see other men's faults, but not our own. When Agur had considered the follies of others, he considered his own follies, and said, 'I am more foolish than any man,' Prov. xxx. 2. When Judah had considered Tamar's sins, he considered his own, and said, 'She is more righteous than I,' Gen. xxxviii. But when Ham did see a fault in his father, all his own faults were hid under a bushel; he cared not that he was his father, nor that he was saved for his righteousness, nor that he had planted a vine-

yard for him and his brethren, nor that he was never drunken before, nor that he had committed greater sins himself; but like them which make their sport of that which should be their sorrow, so he laughed at that which might make him weep. Often did I well, might Noah say, and thou didst never honour me for that; but once did I evil, and for that thou wouldst shame me!

There is a kind of men which are ashamed of other men's faults, but not of their own; they are like flies, which always light upon the sore; if they find any sin, thereof they talk, that is their sport, like a tennis-ball, when they come to their ordinaries; and though they did never well in all their life, yet that fault seemeth greater to them than all their own; these men are so like the devil, that in Rev. xii. 10 the devil is called by their name, an 'accuser of the brethren;' and that you may know that such tongues shall burn in the fire of hell, Saint James saith, that their 'tongues are kindled with the flame of hell' already, James iii. 6. This was ever the property of bad men, to seek faults in good men, to object again, that they may sin without reproof of them. Therefore said Paul, 'So behave yourselves, that they which would slander you may be ashamed, having nothing to speak evil of you,' Titus ii. 8. If Noah had not been drunken, Ham had lost his sport.

Now because this fact of Ham was so heinous, when he is accused of it he is called the father of Canaan, as if he should say, Think what he deserveth, which, being a father himself, would so dishonour his father. It was meet that he which had children should know the duty of a child, and ever think that as he behaved himself towards his father, so his sons would behave themselves to him again; but all this did nothing move him; therefore the greater was his sin.

To conclude, then, as Ham was worse than Noah, whom he derided, so if you mark, they which are wont to speak hardly of others, have greater faults themselves, which they cannot tell how to cover but by disgracing others. Thus much of the wicked son: now of the good sons it followeth;—

*Then took Shem and Japhet a garment, and put it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father, &c.* Solomon saith, 'If sinners tempt thee, yet consent thou not,' Prov. i. 10. So though Ham tempted them, they consented not; but when he said, Come and see, they went and hid. Noah stripped himself, but he could not cover himself; so we can corrupt ourselves, but we cannot amend ourselves. As Ham is accused of two faults, for beholding his father's nakedness, and for

revealing it, so Shem and Japhet are commended for two things, that they would not see their father's nakedness, and that they covered it. All came out of one root, and all had one duty, and yet see what difference was between them: one was glad of his father's shame, and the other were sorry for it; one published it, and the other smothered it. These two, saith Moses, saw not their father's nakedness.

Once it was no shame to be naked, for it is said that Adam and Eve were 'both naked, and were not ashamed,' Gen. ii. 25. But as sin made labour irksome, which was not irksome before, and made heat offensive, which was not offensive before, and made cold hurtful, which was not hurtful before, so it made nakedness shameful, which was not shameful before, that rather than a man would be naked now, he would cover himself, as Adam did, with fig-leaves. Therefore we never read that Noah was naked before he was drunken, shewing that a sober man will never open that which nature hath hid.

This is the difference between man and beast: men are not only ashamed to be seen naked themselves, but, unless it be some Ham, they are ashamed to see another naked: 'Shem and Japhet saw not their father's nakedness.' Who is so blind as he which will not see? Nay, who is so blind as he which will see? The sight of the eye oftentimes draweth the soul out of light into darkness. Knowing, therefore, that it was hard to see like Ham, and not to sin like Ham, they would not see lest they should offend. As they would not see it themselves, so they were careful that none other should see it, and therefore they covered it with their cloaks. For we must not only refrain sin but restrain sin, according to that, Lev. xix. 17, 'Suffer not thy brother to sin.' So Shem and Japhet, seeing how their brother had sinned, stopped the cause, that no more might sin; they were loath that he should see that which he would have them to see; their grief and modesty was such that they did not stay to make him any answer, or ask him any question, but straight they thought what was best to be done; and as a nurse taketh the milk out of her own mouth to give to the child, so they took off their clothes from their backs to cover their father. Such a reverence is in children toward their parents, if they have but nature, that they will not suffer the majesty of their father to wax vile, but rather they will hear any reproach against themselves than abide a word against their father. Now if we do such reverence to earthly fathers, which brings us unto misery, that we had rather shame ourselves than they should bear any shame, why are we so ashamed and afraid to speak for our Father, which calleth us out of misery into happiness? If

Ham be cursed for dishonouring a man, let them fear which dishonour God.

You know that the papists do cover the spots of their bishops with this cloak of Shem and Japhet; and not only they, but others too, for if any speak of corruption in rulers, or bribery in judges, or simony in bishops, or non-residency in pastors, he is said to discover his father's nakedness like Ham. But as we may not reveal all sins lest the uncircumcised rejoice, so we may not cover some sins lest the uncircumcised increase; for if some men's drunkenness were not reproved, they would be drunken still, and make a commonweal of drunkards. Therefore they which will be covered, first let them prove themselves fathers, as Noah was, and after let them amend, as Noah did; and they which cover them, let them distinguish between Noah and Ham, and between error and obstinacy. For some Christ appointed admonition, for others reprehension, for others excommunication, and for others correction; therefore every man's nakedness must not be covered as Noah's was. We will cover the first drunkenness, as Shem and Japhet did, if they will repent as Noah did, and be drunken no more. But shall we follow them like a blind man's boy, to stay them so often as they fall, when they say that they stumble not, though they lie on the ground? This is not the cloak of reverence, but the cloak of flattery. Therefore, as Christ said, 'Let the dead bury the dead,' so I may say, Let the wicked cover the wicked; the wolves are not the lambs' fathers, but the lambs' butchers; therefore if they would be covered, let them speak to their children to cover them; for this is our rule, 'They which sin openly, reprove openly, that the rest may fear,' 1 Tim. v. 20.

Thus you have heard what the bad son did, and what the good sons did. Now we come to Noah again. *Then Noah awoke, and knew what his younger son had done unto him, and said unto him, Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. He said moreover, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant,* &c.

First, he sheweth how Noah cometh to himself, then how he knew what his sons had done unto him, then how he curseth one and blesseth another. As his sons were ashamed of his nakedness when he was drunken, so now he is sober, he is ashamed of it himself; therefore he is said to awake from his wine, as though he had been asleep; for the drunkard, saith Solomon, 'is as one that sleepeth,' Prov. xxiii. 34. When the belly is full, the bones are at rest, so, when Noah was full, his thoughts were at rest; therefore, being as it were lulled asleep with over much wine, he may be said to awake.

Here Moses would exhort all them that sleep with Noah, to awake with Noah. Noah was once intemperate, and many follow him in that; Noah was but once intemperate, and few follow him in that. David was once incontinent, and many follow him in that; David was but once incontinent, and few follow him in that. Peter was once unfaithful, and many follow him in that; Peter was but once unfaithful, and few follow him in that. This is the difference between the faithful and the wicked, both fall, and but one riseth again.

It followeth, *He knew what his younger son had done unto him*, either by the Spirit of God, which suggested him, or else by some other that told him; for a drunken man doth not remember what is said or done, and therefore the drunkard saith, 'I was beaten, but when I awaked, I knew it not,' Prov. xxiii. 35. Therefore when Lot was drunken, his daughters lay with him, and it is said, Gen. xix. 33, that 'he perceived not when they lay down, nor when they rose up;' therefore Noah knew, either by the Spirit which informed him, or by others that told him.

Now, as Moses, declaring Ham's sin, called him 'the father of Canaan,' so Noah repeating his sin again, called him 'his younger son.' He disdaineth to name him, but calleth him a younger son, to aggravate his fault, because we will suffer our elder sons to be familiar with us, but of the younger we look for more reverence; or else because parents are wont to make more of the youngest, and dandle them, as Jacob did Benjamin; and so he might say, My younger son, which for his years should have shewed me most duty, and for my affection should have borne me most love; my younger son hath sought my dishonour, and not content to scorn me himself, hath published my shame, and as much as in him lay, provoked his brethren to scorn me too.

Of whom is a man so often deceived, as of his nearest friend? Lightly the younger son is better than the elder, as Joseph was better than his elder brethren; David was better than his elder brethren; Abel was better than his elder brother; Isaac was better than his elder brother; Jacob was better than his elder brother; but here the youngest is worst, so neither virtue nor vice goeth by age. Now as Christ, when he awoke, rebuked the winds, and comforted his disciples, so Noah, when he awoke, cursed the scorner, and blessed the other. Moses doth not set down his words of choler, but bringeth him in, speaking by the spirit of prophecy, what should come upon all his sons. It is like that the good patriarch had bewailed his own sin before, and now having repented, and got pardon

for it, he cometh forth like a proclaimer of God's judgment, and thundereth against this mocker. What a grief was this to the father, to be constrained to condemn his own son, and with his own mouth to pronounce him banished from the church of God. For though Ham had not the nature of a son, yet Noah had not lost the nature of a father, and he saw what a small number was left upon earth, like Adam's children, for to replenish the whole world again; therefore it grieved him to curse his son, as much as it rejoiced his son to scorn him. Yet as Abraham would sacrifice his son, rather than displease God, so Noah did curse his son, rather than he would displease God, shewing that we should not spare our own bowels, when God would have them punished; but do as the fathers and mothers of idolaters and blasphemers did in the law, who brought the first stone to press their sons to death, Deut. xiii.; shewing that as the Son of God died for them, so their sons should die for God, if they would not serve him. Now the curse goeth forth, 'Cursed be Canaan;' that is, cursed be scorners, cursed be all they which dishonour their father and mother, 'a servant of servants shall he be.' This is the first mention of servants in all the Scripture. Man was not made to serve, but to rule; but sin maketh them serve which should rule; therefore as you saw sin bring in the first nakedness, so you see sin bringing in the first servant. 'A servant of servants shall he be.' This curse is denounced with great vehemency; for he saith not simply, a *servant* shall he be, but 'a *servant of servants* shall he be;' as if he should say, a servant, and more than a servant; that is, of a servile condition, and a servile mind. As the 'Sabbath of Sabbaths' signifieth a high Sabbath, as the 'Song of songs' signifieth an excellent song, as the 'holy of holies' signifieth the holiest place, and as the 'Lord of lords' signifieth the chiefest Lord, so 'vanity of vanities' signifieth the greatest vanity, and 'servant of servants' signifieth the vilest servant. Seeing, then, that the pope taketh this name unto him, and writeth himself 'the servant of servants' in all his indulgences, as though he did ground upon this curse of Ham, it seemeth that the Lord would shew thereby who is like Ham, and who is cursed. Therefore let us not deny him that which the Holy Ghost doth give him; but as he taketh Ham's name, so let him take his curse too.

*Cursed be Canaan*, &c. It was not Canaan which tempted Shem and Japhet to gaze upon their father's nakedness, but it was Ham. How cometh it then that Noah doth curse Canaan, and not Ham? In verse 22 Ham is called 'the father of Canaan,' so that Canaan was Ham's son; therefore God, not content with the punishment of

Ham alone, saith, 'Cursed be Canaan' also; shewing that both Ham and Canaan, the father and the children, shall be cursed for this impiety. Because Ham had shewed himself a rebellious child to Noah, God sheweth that his children shall do the like by him. Here is to be noted, that whereas Ham had elder sons than Canaan, and Canaan was his youngest, yet God, for a purpose, nameth the youngest in the curse; shewing that his wrath should last even to the youngest, and be a great while before it was forgotten. Here is to be noted again, that whereas the country of Canaan was so fruitful, and so blessed a country, that it was called the land that floweth with milk and honey; yet under the name of Canaan, Ham's youngest son (of whom the country of Canaan took the name), God sheweth that the Canaanites shall be cursed in this blessed land, as Cain was a vagabond upon his own ground, Gen. iv., to shew that joy of heart and peace of conscience cometh from God, and nothing else. Now, the issues which followed from this curse do shew that Noah spake not from spleen, but from the Spirit of God; for, first, you read how the Canaanites, who came of Canaan, were slain of the Israelites; then you read how the Gibeonites, which came of Canaan, were made slaves to the Israelites; then you read how the Egyptians and Ethiopians, which came of Canaan, were taken captive by the king of Asshur, Isa. xx. 4; then you read how Nimrod and his accomplices, that came of Canaan, were confounded at Babel, when they went about to exalt themselves. Beside, whereas length of days is a blessing to them which honour their father, Ham, which dishonoured his father, had not one son of his line which lived above one hundred years. So that as Isaac said, 'Jacob have I blessed, and he shall be bleesed,' Gen. xxvii., so Noah may say, Ham have I cursed, and he shall be cursed; for he was cursed indeed, cursed in himself and cursed in his children, cursed in heaven and cursed in earth, cursed with God and cursed with men; for after this he began to be abhorred, and they that came of him. Therefore Abraham commanded his servant that he should not choose a wife for his son of the Canaanites. Isaac giveth the like commandment to his son Jacob; because they were a cursed nation, and hated of God ever since Noah said, 'Cursed be Canaan.' Thus when Ham said unto his brethren, 'Come, and I will shew you my father naked,' he might have said, 'Come, and I will shew you myself accursed.' If God have such wrath against a scorner, think whether thou followest not some sin worse than scorning.

Now, after Noah had cursed Ham, he blessed his brethren: 'Blessed be the Lord God of Shem,' &c. Of Shem came the Jews,

which had the first blessing; and therefore Shem is blessed first. Of Japhet came the Gentiles, which had the latter blessing; and therefore Japhet is blessed after. The form of Shem's blessing is, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Shem,' &c. One which heareth this blessing would think that Noah did not bless Shem, but that he blessed God; for he saith not, 'Blessed be Shem,' but 'Blessed be the Lord God of Shem.' This is to signify that as cursed Canaan came of Ham, so the blessed Messiah should come of Shem; which, though he were Shem's son, yet here he is called Shem's Lord, as he was called David's Son and David's Lord. Then, to shew that Noah doth not bless Shem, but God doth bless him, and Noah prayed that he might be blessed, as Christ gave the Spirit, and John ministered but the water. Thirdly, to shew that God for blessing us should be blessed of us. And therefore Noah said, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Shem,' &c.; as if he should say, Blessed be the Lord which blesseth Shem. Further, this sheweth the difference between Shem's blessing and Japhet's blessing, that is, the Jews and the Gentiles; for he saith, 'God persuade Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem,' as though Japhet were not blessed yet, but should be blessed. But he saith of Shem, 'Blesssed be the Lord God of Shem;' as if he should give him possession, and say, Take thy blessing. For to assure him of God's blessing, he calleth God Shem's God. As we say, My lands are my goods, so he might say, My God and my Lord. Such a propriety the faithful have in God. As Paul[1] saith, 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living,' so I may say, God is not the God of the wicked, but of the righteous; and therefore he is is called 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,' which were all good, and righteous, and holy men.

The next blessing is Japhet's. The form of his blessing is, 'God persuade Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem;' that is, God persuade the Gentiles, which come of Japhet, to embrace the religion of the Jews, which come of Shem. See how God counteth it for a blessing to be in the true religion, and how men should be persuaded unto it, because it is love which cannot be forced. This is the first prophecy in Scripture of the calling of the Gentiles; that is, of our calling to Christ. And to put us in mind that we were once out of the covenant, and but added to the covenant, the name of *Japhet*, which was the father of the Gentiles, doth signify *persuaded* or *enlarged*, as it were added to the church, as though the time were when we were out of the church. Therefore, first, we are

[1] Qu. 'Christ'?—Ed.

indebted to our good Mediator, which added us to the kingdom when we were out of the kingdom; and then that he did it by persuasion, not by compulsion. As Noah prayed to God to persuade Japhet, so he hath persuaded us by his word, and not forced us by his rods; shewing how we should persuade one another to the truth, in the spirit of mildness, remembering that we come of Japhet, which signifieth *persuaded.*

Now, after Shem's blessing, and after Japhet's blessing likewise, he saith, 'Let Canaan be his servant.' This is thrice repeated in three verses together, as if God had ratified it, and sworn it, with a treble verity. For when Joseph told Pharaoh why his dream was doubled, he gave this reason, because it should surely come to pass, Gen. xli. 32. Here is a sweet observation beside, how Shem and Japhet are blessed in Ham's curse, and how Ham is cursed in their blessing; for when he saith, Let Canaan be Shem and Japhet's servant, he implieth this, that besides they were blessed in their own children (because they were obedient to them), they should be blessed in Ham's children, because they were servants to them. So Shem and Japhet were blessed in Ham's curse. Again, beside that Ham was cursed in his own children, because they were rebellious to him, he is cursed also in Shem's and Japhet's children, because they were lords over him, according to this saying, 'Let Canaan be their servant.' So Ham is cursed in Shem and Japhet's blessing, as the Egyptians were drowned in the waters which saved the Israelites. These are the notes which I could pick out of the story. Here you see how Ham was cursed, but for doing evil; and how Shem and Japhet were blessed, but for doing well. Therefore, as the angel said to them which sought Christ at the sepulchre, 'Fear not you,' so I may say to all which seek Christ, Fear not you; for when Ham is cursed, Shem and Japhet are blessed. So when the wicked are cursed, the godly shall be blessed, as the sheep went to the right hand when the goats went to the left hand. This is enough to shew what we are, that when God saved but eight persons in the flood, yet you see one of them drink until he be drunken, and another scorn until he be cursed. If two among so few did so, when the flood was by them, what marvel though so many do so now the flood is gone and the weather calm! As there was a Ham in the ark, so look always to have a Ham in the church. Shem did not go out of the ark because Ham was in the ark, neither let the faithful go out of the church because the wicked are in the church. As Ham scorned, and Noah was scorned, so there shall be always one that persecuteth and one which is persecuted. If the son persecute

the father, think it not strange to be persecuted of any; for they which are not persecuted, likely are persecutors themselves. Thus you have seen Noah drunken and scorned, Ham scorning and cursed, Shem and Japhet reverencing and blessed. In this story is the first mention of planting vineyards, the first speech of drinking wine, the first example of drunkenness, the first blessing and cursing of parents, the first name of servant, and the first prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles. Noah is a warning to all drunkards, Ham is a warning to all scorners, Shem and Japhet are an example for all subjects to reverence their rulers, and for all children to reverence their parents. Now, as Noah prayed, God persuade Japhet to dwell with Shem, so God persuade us to dwell with Christ!

# THE ART OF HEARING.

IN TWO SERMONS.

## TO THE READER.

By the ear cometh knowledge, and therefore it is likely that many would profit by sermons, if they were taught to hear. But before they can tell how to hear, that is, what things to observe, and the way to remember them, it is not possible that they should learn much, though they hear often; for this I know by trial, even of those which are accounted among the best and ancientest hearers in London, that they might learn more in a month than they have gathered in twenty years. For they understand neither the Lord's prayer, nor the creed, nor the ten commandments; but have a few notes in their heads of some sermons that they have heard, and that is all their knowledge, except some few which have kept the order laid down in this book. Therefore, that every man may be able not only to make a confession of his faith, but to give a reason of his faith too: that which I have preached, here I have written, as a catechism for hearers to begin at; desiring all my brethren that they would tell their flocks at the first, that they shall never profit much, unless they record their sermons so soon as they are gone, and that they, as teachers, would study to deliver that which is worthy to be recorded.

# THE ART OF HEARING;

Teaching a way to remember Sermons or Counsel afterward as well as presently, and how every Sermon shall take away some corruption from the Hearer.

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## THE FIRST SERMON.

*Take heed how you hear.*—LUKE VIII. 18.

THIS is the warning of Christ to his disciples, after they had heard the parable of the seed, how it fell in four grounds, and but one of the four brought forth fruit. Here Christ exhorteth his disciples to be that ground, and we exhort you. As God sent his prophets and teachers to Jerusalem, that was the chief city of the Jews, where the temple was built, and where the priests, and the Levites, and the doctors dwelt, like an university, that from it all the towns and villages about might receive instruction and light, like a beacon which standeth upon a hill, and is seen over all the country, so God hath done to this Jerusalem of yours. The city of Jerusalem had never so many prophets crying at once in her streets as this city wherein we dwell, though the ox which treadeth out the corn hath often been attempted to be muzzled, even of those which tread not at all. Yet as the lambs breed in winter, and quails came with the wind, so preachers spring in the time of discouragement more than when nothing hindereth them. And whether it be our ambition (as the kindred of Christ said, 'They which will be famous go to great places'), or whether God would make this city a spring and fountain to water the land, as he did Jerusalem, here is the college of the prophets, here is the voice of a crier, here dwells the seer, though he be hated, and scorned, and contemned for his pains. When I consider how many labourers God hath sent to this vine-

yard, and yet how little fruit it yieldeth to the sower, I cannot impute it to the want of teaching, but to the want of hearing; neither so much to the want of hearing, as to a kind of negligent hearing, like the highway which received the seed, but did not cover it. Therefore when this sentence came to my mind, methought I should go no further until I had taught you *how to hear*. I stood in a doubt a while whether I should take such a short text; but when I looked into longer than it, methought this seemed longer than they, and, as I judge, a text which should be preached before all texts, which, because it was not taught and learned at the first, a thousand sermons have been lost and forgotten, as though they had never been preached at all; therefore let me say as my text saith, before I expound it, 'Take heed how you hear,' while I teach you *how to hear*.

There is no sentence in Scripture which the devil had rather you should not regard than this lesson of hearing; for if you take heed how you hear, you shall not only profit by this sermon, but every sermon after this shall leave such instruction, and peace, and comfort with you as you never thought the word contained for you; therefore no marvel if the tempter do trouble you when you should hear, as the fowls cumbered Abraham when he should offer sacrifice. For be ye well assured that this is an infallible sign that some excellent and notable good is toward you, when the devil is so busy to hinder your hearing of the word, which of all other things he doth most envy unto you. Therefore as he pointed Adam to another tree, lest he should go to the tree of life, Gen. iii., so, knowing the word to be like unto the tree of life, he appointeth you to other business, to other exercises, to other works, and to other studies, lest you should hear it and be converted to God, whereby the tribute and revenue of his kingdom should be impaired; therefore mark how many forces he hath bent against one little scripture, to frustrate this counsel of Christ, 'Take heed how you hear.' First, he labours all that he can to stay us from hearing; to effect this, he keeps us at taverns, at plays, in our shops, and appoints us some other business at the same time, that when the bell calls to the sermon, we say, like the churlish guests, We cannot come, Mat. xxii. If he cannot stay us away with any business or exercise, then he casts fancies into our minds, and drowsiness into our heads, and sounds into our ears, and sets temptations before our eyes; that though we hear, yet we should not mark, like the birds which fly about the church. If he cannot stay our ears, nor slack our attention as he would, then he tickleth us to mislike something

which was said, and by that make us reject all the rest. If we cannot mislike anything which is said, then he infecteth us with some prejudice of the preacher; he doth not as he teacheth, and therefore we less regard what he saith. If there be no fault in the man, nor in the doctrine, then, lest it would convert us, and reclaim us, he courseth all means to keep us from the consideration of it, until we have forgot it. To compass this, so soon as we have heard, he takes us to dinner, or to company, or to pastime, to remove our minds, that we should think no more of it. If it stay in our thoughts, and like us well, then he hath this trick; instead of applying the doctrine, which we should follow, he turns us to praise and extol the preacher. He made an excellent sermon! he hath a notable gift! I never heard any like him! He which can say so, hath heard enough; this is the repetition which you make of our sermons when you come home, and so to your business again till the next sermon come; a breath goeth from us, and a sound cometh to you, and so the matter is ended. If all these comers hear in vain, and the tempter be so busy to hinder this work more than any other, Christ's warning may serve for you, as well as his disciples, 'Take heed how you hear,' Mark iv. 24. There is a hearing, and a preparative before hearing, Eccles. v. 1; there is a praying, and a preparative before praying; there is a receiving, and a preparative before receiving, 1 Cor. xi. 28. As I called examination the forerunner, which prepareth the way to the receiver, so I may call attention the forerunner, which prepareth the way to the preacher: like the plough, which cutteth up the ground, that it may receive the seed. As there is a foundation, upon which the stones, and lime, and timber are laid, which holdeth the building together; so, where this foundation of hearing is laid, there the instructions, and lessons, and comforts do stay and are remembered; but he which leaneth his ears on his pillow, goeth home again like the child which he leadeth in his hand, and scarce remembereth the preacher's text. A divine tongue and a holy ear make sweet music, but a deaf ear makes a dumb tongue. There is nothing so easy as to hear, and yet there is nothing so hard as to hear well. You come not hither to learn how to hear, but you come hither to hear as you were wont; for there is none but thinks before he comes to hear, that he knows how to hear already. But when I have shewed you Christ's meaning in this caveat, you shall judge whether you have heard or not heard before you learned how to hear. In the seventeenth chapter, and the fifth verse of St Matthew's

Gospel, the Father teacheth you how to hear; now, the Son teacheth you how to hear; shewing, as James saith, that 'hearers only' are not blessed, for many shall say unto Christ, 'Have we not heard thee in our synagogues?' whom he will answer with, 'I know you not;' and therefore it is not enough to hear, but you must care how you hear; it is not enough to pray, but you must care how you pray; it is not enough to receive, but you must care how you receive; it is not enough to suffer, but you must care how you suffer; it is not enough to give, but you must care how you give; it is not enough to believe, but you must care how you believe; for God hath appointed the way as well as the end. Because Cain regarded not the manner, God regarded not his sacrifice. It is better to *do well* than to *do good;* for a man cannot offend in doing well, but he may offend in doing good, if he do not well. Therefore Christ, whom the Father bade us hear, teacheth us not only to hear, but how to hear, Mark iv. 14; teacheth us not only to read, but how to read, Mat. xxiv. 15; teacheth us not only to suffer, but how to suffer, Mat. v. 10; teacheth us not only to receive, but how to receive, Luke xxii. 19; teacheth us not only to pray, but how to pray, Luke xi. 1; signifying that there is more sin in hearing, and reading, and praying, and suffering, and receiving amiss, than in not hearing, reading, praying, suffering, or receiving at all. Therefore Paul takes the Christian before his race, and gives him this watchword: 'So run that thou mayest obtain,' 1 Cor. ix. 24. That is, so seek, that thou mayest find; so ask, that thou mayest obtain; so knock, that it may be opened; so give, that thou mayest do good; so suffer, that thou mayest have comfort; so hear, that thou mayest profit. How many have fasted, and watched, and prayed more than we, and yet lost all their devotions, because they thought not of this rule, to do good in a good sort! The papists, so they pray, care not how they pray, for they think it enough to pray; and therefore when they have gone over their beads, their prayer is done, although they never thought what they asked. But Jeremiah saith, 'Cursed be he that doth the business of the Lord negligently,' whether we hear negligently, or pray negligently, or receive negligently, or preach negligently. The scribes and pharisees did fast, and watch, and pray, and hear, and read, and give, and do all that we can do, and yet Christ rewarded all their works with a woe: 'Woe be unto you, scribes and pharisees.' The disciple which betrayed Christ, heard as much as the disciples that loved Christ; yet he had no feeling, nor comfort, nor profit with all his company with Christ, because he did not use it as the rest did.

The Jews did hear more than all the world beside, yet because they took no heed to that which they heard, therefore they crucified him which came to save them, and became the cursedest people upon the earth, which were the blessedest nation before; therefore the A B C of a Christian is to learn the art of hearing. We care how we sow, lest our seed should be lost; so let us care how we hear, lest God's seed be lost. There is no seed which groweth so fast as God's seed, if it be sown well; therefore, that I may shew you that method of hearing, which Christ commendeth here to his disciples, it is necessary to observe five things: first, the necessity of hearing; secondly, the fruit which cometh by hearing; thirdly, the kinds of hearers; fourthly, the danger of hearing amiss; fifthly, that manner of hearing, which will make you remember that which is said, and teach you more in a year than you have learned all your life.

Touching the necessity of hearing. When Christ saith, *Take heed how you hear*, he implieth that all his disciples should *hear*; nay, they which were excommunicate from the prayers, and from the councils, and from the sacraments for their sins, yet were not excommunicate from hearing, because they should learn to repent.

Here that large commandment of our Saviour Christ standeth, 'that which I say unto you, I say unto all;' therefore it is a general proclamation, 'Whosoever hath an ear to hear, let him hear,' Luke viii. 8; the place implieth that all should hear, though it importeth that all cannot hear. When the voice spake from heaven, it said nothing but, 'This is my beloved Son, hear him,' Mat. xvii. 5, as though all the duties of man were comprised in hearing. When Christ spake but of one thing which is necessary, he spake of hearing, Luke x. 42; as though it were so necessary to hear, that all necessities should give place unto it. When men would not hear, God spake to the ground, 'O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord,' Jer. xxii. 29, shewing that God so contemneth them which will not hear, that he regards the earth, and the trees, and the stones, being senseless creatures, above them.

When God struck Zacharias, he made him dumb, but not deaf, Luke i. 20; when God struck Saul, he made him blind, but not deaf, Acts ix. 8; when God struck Mephibosheth, he made him lame, but not deaf, 2 Sam. iv. 4. Thus God would have them hear, which cannot see, nor speak, nor go. But there is a devil which is called the deaf devil, Mark ix. 25, shewing that the devil would have us deaf, because he that heareth instruction is in the way to life, but 'He which hears not instruction, goeth out of the way,' Prov. x. 17. To shew the necessity of hearing, the word which we

should hear is called meat, Heb. v. 12, and the want of the word is called a famine, Amos viii. 11, as though it were as necessary for us to hear as it is to eat.

Although our hearts are contrary to the word, more than to any thing beside, yet no man can think that this is the word of God, but he thinks it necessary to be heard. Besides, if Christ be the Word (as St John calleth him in chap. i. 14), and the word is received by no other means, but by hearing only, can any man receive Christ without hearing? Let not any be thus fond so vainly to dream, for that were to receive the Word without the word.

Therefore, as John wept until the book was opened, and so soon as it was opened, all the elders sung; so we should count it the greatest cause of weeping, when the word is taken from us that we cannot hear it, and the greatest cause of rejoicing when it is open to us, that we may hear without let. Thus much of the necessity of hearing.

Secondly, Touching the fruit that cometh by hearing. Of all our senses, hearing is the sense of learning; and therefore Solomon begins his wisdom with, 'Hearken, my son,' Prov. i. 8, opening as it were the door where wisdom must enter. Therefore, except in praying, temptations never trouble a man so much as in hearing, which sheweth that these two are the destroyers of the destroyer; therefore, as the tempter himself could not abide to hear the word when Christ spake, Mat. iv., so he cannot abide that we should hear the word. It must needs be good for us, which our enemies would keep from us.

Many hearing the word have met with knowledge, have met with comfort, have met with salvation; but without the word never any was converted to God. Therefore whensoever the word is preached, every one may say to himself, as the disciples said to the blind man, 'Be of good comfort, he calleth thee,' Mark x. 49, be of good comfort, the Lord calleth thee. When Christ heard a woman say, 'Blessed are the breasts which gave thee suck,' Christ replied, 'Blessed are they which hear the word of God,' Luke xi. 28, shewing that his disciples were more blessed for hearing him, than his mother for bearing him. As Isaac gave Jacob a double blessing, so Christ blessed them again; for in Mat. xvi. 17, he saith, 'Blessed are the ears which hear the things which you hear,' shewing that the Jews were more blessed than all the world, because they had this one blessing, to hear the truth. If they be blessed which hear, then you come hither for a blessing, and he which is blessed wanteth nothing. Every privilege doth import some special good to him which hath it; but it is the privilege of man to hear the word, and therefore 'the Word became man,' John i. 14, because it belongeth

only to man. God hath given life, and light, and food, to fowls, and fishes, and beasts, but his word is the prerogative of man. As to speak is the property of man, so to hear is the property of man. To shew the fruit which cometh by hearing, Christ calleth the word which we should hear, *verbum regni*, 'the word of the kingdom,' Mat. xiii. 19, as though it brought a kingdom with it; to shew the fruit which cometh by hearing, the disciples call the word which we should hear, *verbum vitæ*, 'the word of life,' John vi. 68, as though it brought life with it; to shew the fruit that cometh by hearing, Christ compareth the good hearers to the fruitful ground; to shew the fruit that cometh by hearing, Paul saith, 'Faith cometh by hearing,' in Rom. x.; there is one fruit. Knowledge cometh by hearing, Mat. xv. 10; there is another fruit. Comfort cometh by hearing, Ps. cxix.; there is another fruit. The sense of sin cometh by hearing; there is another fruit. As Christ with five loaves and two fishes fed five thousand men, so Peter with one sermon converted three thousand souls. Agrippa hearing Paul but once, almost became a Christian; the eunuch hearing Philip but once, straight received the faith; Zaccheus hearing Christ but once, gave half his goods to the poor; so I doubt not but some go from our sermons almost Christians, like Agrippa; some whole Christians, like the eunuch, expressing their faith like Zaccheus. Now a little, and then a little, the soul groweth like the body. If you hear well, our voice is like the sound of the rams' horns, that made the walls of Jericho to reel; nay, it will make the walls of hell to reel; for the same word made the prince of hell give back, Mat. iv. 7. Although at all other times we are as plain and simple as Jacob, yet at this time we have a promise, and it is given to us (for your sake) to speak sometime that which we conceive not ourselves, because the hour is come wherein God hath appointed to call some of you, as he hath done some of you before. Therefore as the princely spirit came upon Saul when he should reign, to teach him how he should rule, 1 Sam. xi., so the prophetical spirit cometh upon preachers when they should teach, to teach them how they should speak. Therefore, as Christ was contented to be baptized of John, Mat. iii. 15, so be you content to be instructed of us, that if we be more simple than you, the glory of God may appear more in converting you by us.

Thirdly, Touching the kind of hearers. If all which come to hear did hear as they should, Christ need not warn us, Take heed how you hear. But as we pray, so we hear; the one is a lip-labour and the other is an ear-labour. As children play the truants in the school, so men play the truants in the church. How many come to

hear me, and yet, peradventure, some do not hear, while I speak of hearing! One hath no pitcher, another hath left his pitcher behind him, another hath brought a broken pitcher which will hold no water; therefore Christ calleth us fishers; for as a fisher taketh but a few in respect of those which go by, so we reform but a few in respect of them which go as they came. First, of Paul's hearers, and then of Christ's hearers, and after of our hearers. When the Athenians heard Paul preach of the resurrection, it is said that 'some mocked;' there is one sort, 'the chair of scorners,' Ps. i.: some said, 'We will hear thee of this again;' there is another sort, which are not yet resolved, but desire to be better instructed; some did assent unto him, and received his doctrine, as Dionysius Areopagita, and Damaris, a woman, Acts xvii. 32; there is the best sort. We never preach but we have all these hearers: some mock, some waver, and some believe.

Now of Christ's hearers. We find in the Gospel that Christ had four sorts of hearers; while I count them to you, think of what sort you are, for I doubt not but that there be here of all sorts. Some heard him to wonder at him, like Herod, which was moved with the fame that went of him. Some came to hear, because they would know all things, that they might be able to talk of them. It seems that Judas was such a scholar, for he had learned to preach, but not to follow. Some came to cavil and to trip him in his speeches; of these hearers were the scribes and pharisees, which would make him an enemy to Cæsar. Some were like to the good ground, which came to know what they might do, and how they should believe; like the humble scribe which inquired the way to heaven.

Now to our hearers. As there were wise virgins and foolish virgins, so there are wise hearers and foolish hearers. Some are so nice that they had rather pine than take their food of any which is licensed by a bishop, as if Elias should refuse his food because a raven brought it to him, and not an angel; some come unto the service to save forfeiture, and then they stay the sermon for shame; some come because they would not be counted atheists; some come because they would avoid the name of papists; some come to please their friends. One hath a good man to his friend, and lest he should offend him, he frequents the preachers, that his friend may think well of him; some come with their masters and mistresses for attendance; some come with a fame; they have heard great speech of the man, and therefore they will spend one hour to hear him once, but to see whether it be so as they say; some come because they be idle; to pass the time they go to a sermon, lest they should

be weary of doing nothing; some come with their fellows: one saith, Let us go to the sermon; Content, saith he, and he goeth for company; some hear the sound of a voice as they pass by the church, and step in before they be aware; another hath some occasion of business, and he appoints his friends to meet him at such a sermon, as they do at Paul's. All these are accidental hearers, like children which sit in the market and neither buy nor sell. But as many foxes have been taken when they came to take, so they which come to spy, or wonder, or gaze, or scoff, have changed their minds before they went home, like one which finds when he doth not seek.

As ye come with divers motions, so ye hear in divers manners: one is like an Athenian, and he hearkeneth after news; if the preacher say anything of our armies beyond the sea, or council at home, or matters at court, that is his lure. Another is like the pharisee, and he watcheth if anything be said that may be wrested to be spoken against persons in high place, that he may play the devil in accusing of his brethren; let him write that in his tables too. Another smacks of eloquence, and he gapes for a phrase, that when he cometh to his ordinary he may have one figure more to grace and worship his tale. Another is malcontent, and he never pricketh up his ears till the preacher come to gird against some whom he spiteth, and when the sermon is done, he remembereth nothing which was said to him, but that which was spoken against others. Another cometh to gaze about the church; he hath an evil eye, which is still looking upon that from which Job did avert his eye. Another cometh to muse; so soon as he is set, he falleth into a brown study; sometimes his mind runs on his market, sometime on his journey, sometimes of his suit, sometimes of his dinner, sometimes of his sport after dinner, and the sermon is done before the man thinks where he is. Another cometh to hear, but so soon as the preacher hath said his prayer, he falls fast asleep, as though he had been brought in for a corpse, and the preacher should preach at his funeral.

This is the generation of hearers. Is not the saying of Christ fulfilled now, 'Hearing you hear not'? because we hear and hear not; like a covetous churl which goeth by a beggar when he crieth in Christ's name for relief, and heareth him cry, but will not hear him, because he craveth that which he will not part with. May we not say again with Christ, 'What went ye out to see,' rather than, 'What went ye out to hear?' seeing ye remember that which ye see, and forget all that which ye hear. So you depart from our sermons like a slide-thrift's purse, which will hold no money; and as you go

home one saith, he doth not edify; another saith, I cannot profit by him; another saith, he keeps not to his text; another saith, he speaks not to the heart; as if the ground should complain of the seed, which will not receive the seed. Is not this the cause why your preachers about the city care not how they preach, because their flocks have no care to hear? Is not this the cause why God doth not hear us, because we will not hear him? Is not this the cause why ye are such doctors in the world, and such infants in the church? Ye learned your trade in seven years, but you have not learned religion in all your years. Can you give any reason for it but this? you marked when your master taught you your trade, because you should live by it; but you marked not the preacher when he taught you religion, because you do not live by it.

Come now to the danger by hearing amiss: Christ saith, 'Take heed how you hear.' In the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy it is said, 'Take heed how you forget that which ye hear.' This *take heed* always goeth before some danger; therefore, as Paul saith, that men receive the sacrament to their salvation, or to their damnation, 1 Cor. xi., so Christ saith, that men hear the word to their salvation, or to their damnation, 'The word which I have spoken shall judge you in the latter day,' John xii. It is called 'the savour of life,' because it saveth; and it is called 'the savour of death,' because it condemneth, 2 Cor. ii. 16. An evil eye engendereth lust, and an evil tongue engendereth strife; but an evil ear maketh an heretic, and a schismatic, and an idolater. This careless hearing made God take away his word from the Jews; therefore, you may hear the word so as it may be taken from you, as the talent was from him that hid it, Mat. xxv.; for God will not leave his pearls with swine; but as he saith, 'What hadst thou to do to take my words in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest to be reformed?' so he will say, What hadst thou to do to take my word in thy ear, seeing thou hatest to be reformed? If any of you go away no better than you came, you are not like hearers, but like cyphers, which supply a place, but signify nothing; so you take a room, but learn nothing; and they which are cyphers in the house of God, shall be cyphers in the kingdom of God. Therefore, if thou have an evil eye, and an evil tongue, and an evil hand, and an evil foot, yet have not an evil ear too: for then all is evil, because the ear must teach all; if the ear hearken to evil, then the heart must learn evil. Therefore an evil ear is compared to a bad porter, which lets in every one in a gay coat, though he be never so bad, and keeps out him that goeth bare, though he be never so good; so an evil ear lets all that is evil enter

into the heart, but all that is good it shuts the door against, lest it should set the spirit and the flesh at variance. Oh, if the adder had not stopped his ear, how long since had he been charmed! But the shortest time in God's service, is the longest time in all the day. The beasts came to the ark to save themselves; and men will not come to the church to save themselves. It is too far, saith Jeroboam; but it were not too far if Jeroboam were not unwilling. One thing is necessary, and all unnecessaries are preferred before it. The greatest treasure in the world is most despised, the star which should lead us to Christ, the ladder which should mount us to heaven, the water that should cleanse our leprosy, the manna that should refresh our hunger, and the book that we should meditate on day and night, Ps. i. 2, lieth in our windows, no man readeth it, no man regardeth it; the love of God, and the love of knowledge, and the love of salvation is so cold, that we will not read over one book for it, for all we spend so many idle times while we live. If Samuel had thought that God had spoken to him, he would not have slept; but because he thought it was not God, but Eli, therefore he slept; so, because you remember not that it is God which speaks, therefore you mark not. But if you remember Christ's saying, 'He which heareth you, heareth me, and he which despiseth you, despiseth me,' you would hear the voice of the preacher, as you would hear the voice of God. Surely, beloved, we know no other way to save you, nor ourselves; if we did, how wretched were we to keep it from you, which have no other calling, but to shew you the way of salvation! If this be the way and no other, if this be shewed you and no other, and yet you will not take it, but choose another, then are not you condemned by any other, but you condemn yourselves. He which will not hear, is worse than Herod; for as bad as he was, yet it is said of him, that he heard John. Nay, even those whom our Saviour Christ in the parable before this text compareth to the barren, the stony, and the thorny ground, were all hearers; and therefore he which will not hear, is worse than any ground. It is said of Saul, that though he were haunted with an evil spirit, yet when he heard David play upon the harp, the evil spirit departed from him; so they which hear have some ease of their sins, some peace of conscience, some intermission of their fear, as Saul had when he heard the harp; but they which will not hear, have no intermission of their fear, nor of their grief, nor of their sins, because the evil spirit never departeth from them. Therefore, as all the beasts tremble when the lion roareth, so let all men hearken when God teacheth.

# THE ART OF HEARING.

## THE SECOND SERMON.

*Take heed how you hear.*—LUKE VIII. 18.

IN the end hereof is proved that none should preach without due meditation, which is a common presumption in these days, and makes the word and ministry despised.

Now it remaineth that I should teach you so to hear, that you may remember that which is said, and learn more by one sermon than you reap by ten. Christ calleth none unto him but them which hunger and thirst; as if none were fit to hear the word but they which hunger after it, and bring a stomach with them. It is written of the hart, that when he lifteth up his ears he is quick of hearing, and heareth every noise; but when he layeth down his ears, he is deaf and heareth nothing; so it is when you mark, and when you mark not. They which are quick of hearing, are sure of remembrance, but they which are dull of hearing, are short in keeping; therefore, before I teach you how to hear, give me leave to say again as my text saith, 'Take heed how you hear,' that both our labours be not lost.

As there be two spirits, so there be two doctrines, two wisdoms, and two counsels. In 1 Tim. iv. 1, there is a doctrine of devils; if you hear that doctrine, you hearken to the devil, as Saul did to a witch. In Mat. xv., there is a doctrine of men, which Christ called 'leaven;' if you hearken to that, you shall err like men, because the blind lead the blind, Mark x. In Gen. iii., there is a counsel of the serpent; if you hearken to that, you shall perish like Eve. In 2 Sam. xviii., there is a wisdom of Ahithophel; if you hearken to that, you shall speed like Absalom. Of all these Solomon saith, 'Hearken no more to the words which make thee err,' Prov. xix.

27. But there is another doctrine, Acts xiii. 12, which is called, 'The doctrine of the Lord;' of this it is said, Luke viii., 'Whosoever hath an ear to hear, let him hear.'

Now, to shew you how you should hear; when Peter and John would make the cripple attentive, they said unto him, 'Look upon us,' Acts iii.; so many, to sharpen their attention, desire to stand before the preacher, that they may look him in the face. By this little help Peter sheweth that we had need to use many helps to make us hear well. In Jer. xiii. 15, when the Lord speaketh, it is said, 'Hear, and give ear,' as though we should hear, and more than hear. This *more than hear*, is to mark, and understand, and remember, and believe, and follow that which we hear; like the Jews which said, 'All which thou speakest from the Lord, we will do it,' Exod. xxiv. 3; so all that which we speak unto you from the Lord, you should do it; therefore all the commandments but the last, are commandments of doing. And Solomon, in Eccles. xii. 13, concludes his doctrine with this, which he called the sum of all, 'Fear the Lord, and keep his commandments.'

In Exod. iii. 5, God teacheth us how to hear, when he speaks to Moses, and bids him 'put off his shoes;' so we should put off our lusts, and our thoughts, and our cares, and our fancies, and all our business, when God speaks; for he which thinks or doth anything else, when he should do that which is better, though it be good which he doth, yet he doth sin in doing it. In Rev. x. an angel teacheth us how to hear, when he willed John to eat the book, shewing that we should hunger after the word, and digest it into every part, as we digest meat.

In Mat. xv., Christ teacheth us how to hear, when he saith 'Hear and understand.' And again, in Mark iv., when he saith, 'Take heed what you hear.' And Isaiah teacheth you how to hear, when he saith, hear for afterwards, Isa. xlii. 23, shewing that more do hear for the present than for afterward, because they forget it again, and after a while are never the better. In 2 Cor. vi. 1, Paul teacheth us how to hear, when he saith, 'Receive not the grace of God in vain;' shewing that many hear comfort, and are not comforted; many here instruction, and are not instructed. James teacheth us how to hear, chap. i. 22, when he saith, 'Be not hearers only, but doers,' shewing that you should do as you hear, as you would have us do as we teach. In Luke x., Mary teacheth us how to hear, when she leaves all to sit at Christ's feet and mark his doctrine, shewing that we should not say, like the churlish guests, we have other business, Mat. xviii., but that this is our business, as

Christ answered his parents, 'I must go about my Father's business.'

In Luke ii., the virgin teacheth us how to hear: when she heard the sayings of Anna, and Simeon, and Christ, it is said that 'she pondered them, and laid them up in her heart,' shewing that our ears should be but messengers to the heart; for our treasure should be where the heart is, as the heart is where the treasure is. In Acts xvii., the men of Berea teach us how to hear, when they went home and searched the Scriptures so soon as they had heard Paul preach, to see whether Moses and the prophets did teach the same, shewing that the word is our touchstone to try the doctrines.

In Luke viii., all the disciples teach us how to hear, when they noted Christ's parable, and repeated it again unto him to know the meaning; shewing that we should not only hear, and the preacher only preach, but if you doubt of anything, you should inquire, and they should instruct you again.

In Luke iii., the soldiers, and the harlots, and the publicans teach us how to hear, when they come to inquire, and ask, 'Master, what shall we do?' shewing that we should come to hear something which may encourage us to this virtue, or arm us against that vice, that we go from hearing to doing, as John taught them. All these are glasses in the Scripture for the hearer to dress himself by, before he come to the sermon.

Beside these, other things do teach us too. As Solomon saith, 'Go to the pismire, and learn to labour,' so Christ in the beginning of this chapter sends us to the husbandman to learn to hear. As he prepareth the ground before he soweth his seed, lest his seed should be lost, so we should prepare our hearts before we hear, lest God's seed be lost. In John x., he sends us to the sheep; as they know the voice of their shepherd, and will not hear a stranger, so we should know the voice of Christ from the voice of popes, or doctors, or councils, or traditions, lest we go, like Samuel, from God to Eli. When you have been in the sheep folds, go to the woods and learn of the birds; for they will listen to him which teacheth them to sing, that they may learn to sing the same note after him; so we should learn to sing the tune of the Spirit, for they which hear the word aright, learn to speak even as the word speaketh.

Beside these schoolmasters, we have other teachers too; all the titles which are given to the word, do teach us how we should hear the word. The apostles call their writings *epistles*, the epistle to the Romans, the epistle to the Corinthians, &c.; shewing that the word is like an epistle sent from God to man, wherein he writes his

mind familiarly unto us, and therefore we should read it, hear it, mark it, and scan it, as we would scan a letter which comes from some of our familiar and dear friends.

In Mark xiv., the gospel of Christ is called his *testament*, or *will*, shewing that our legacies are written in it, and that we should hear it, and mark it, and ply it, till we be as cunning in God's will as we are in our father's will. In 1 Tim. vi. the word is called a *charge*, and in 2 Tim. iv. God is called a *judge;* shewing that we should hear the word of God as we hearken to a judge, when he gives a charge or pronounceth a sentence; for every sentence in this book is a charge to the king, or the counsellor, or the lawyer, or the preacher, or one or other; let every one hear his charge.

In Heb. v. 14, the word is called *meat*, shewing that we should desire and hunger to hear it. And as the stomach sends the strength of the meat into every member of the body, so we should send to the eye that which is spoken to the eye; and to the ear, that which is spoken to the ear; and to the tongue, that which is spoken to the tongue; and to the hand, that which is spoken to the hand. If thou hear comfort, apply that to fear; if thou hear a promise, apply that to thy distrust; if thou hear a threatening, apply that to thy presumption, and fill up the gap still where the devil entereth.

In the parable before my text, the word is compared to *seed*, the preachers to sowers, and the hearers to the ground; shewing that ye come hither to be watered, and dressed, and manured; therefore if God's seed be sown, and the devil's fruit come up, you are like the Jews, which brought Christ vinegar, when he thirsted, for wine.

As the little birds perk up their heads when their dam comes with meat, and prepare their beaks to take it, striving who shall catch most (now this looks to be served, and now that looks for a bit, so every mouth is open till it be filled); so you are here like birds, and we the dam, and the word the food; therefore you must prepare a mouth to take it. They which are hungry will strive for the bread which is cast amongst them, and think, This is spoken to me, this is spoken to me, I have need of this, and I have need of this: comfort, go thou to my fear; promise, go thou to my distrust; threatening, go thou to my security; and the word shall be like a perfume, which hath odour for every one.

These are good remembrancers for all hearers, to think that the word is an epistle from God unto them; that it is the will wherein

their legacies are written ; that it is a charge from the Judge of life and death ; that it is the meat whereby they live ; that it is the seed, which if it grow they are fruitful, if it grow not they have no fruit. But these are general matters ; my desire is to teach you a compendious way of hearing, which you have not heard before ; that as the word is called 'a brief word,' so you may learn it briefly ; for it is not gainful unto us, as it is to lawyers, physicians, and chirurgeons, to keep you long in hand ; but to heal you, and despatch you quickly, as Christ healed the lepers.

This age hath devised divers methods to learn many things in shorter time than they were learned of old. A man may spend seven years in learning to write, and he may meet with a scribe which will teach him as much in a month. A prentice may spend nine years in learning a trade, and some master (if he were disposed), would teach him as much in a twelvemonth. A man may fetch such a compass that he may be a whole month in going to Berwick ; and another, which knoweth the way, will go it in less than a week ; so to every thing there is a further way, and a nearer way, and so there is to knowledge. You do not remember the hundredth part of that which you have heard, and to-morrow you will not remember the tenth note which you have heard this day. It may be that some will remember more ; and why not thou as well as he ? because one useth an help of his memory, which the other useth not. If you will use his policy, you shall remember as well as he ; for let him neglect his help, and the best memory here shall not carry away half which he marketh now, until it be night. When the woman of Samaria heard Christ speak of a water, of which 'he that drinketh shall thirst no more,' Oh (saith she), 'give me of that water.' So, now you hear of such a way, you would fain know it, but will you use it ? I wish that I were such a messenger, that I could compel you unto it ; for truly until you use it, you shall never learn faster than you do. Now I think you have a desire to hear it, I will shew it unto you ; first, in mine opinion two things out of every sermon are especially to be noted ; that which thou didst not know before, and that which speaketh to thine own sin ; for so thou shalt increase thy knowledge, and lessen thy vices.

Now if thou wouldest remember both these a year hence as fresh as now, this is the best policy that ever thou shalt learn, to put them presently in practice ; that is, to send them abroad to all the parts of thy soul and members of thy body, and reform thyself semblably to them, and thou shalt never forget them, for thy practice remembereth them. But before this you must use an-

other help, that is, record every note in thy mind, as the preacher goeth; and after, before thou dost eat, or drink, or talk, or do anything else, repeat all to thyself. I do know some in the university, which did never hear good sermon, but as soon as they were gone they rehearsed it thus, and learned more by this (as they said) than by their reading and study; for recording that which they had heard when it was fresh, they could remember all, and hereby got a better facility in preaching than they could learn in books. The like profit I remember I gained, when I was a scholar, by the like practice.

The philosophers and orators that have written such volumes, have left in their writings, that this was the keeper of their learning, like the bag which beareth the treasures. Therefore I may say with Christ, that the wicked are wiser than Christians; for the orators and philosophers used this help in hearing of earthly things, and we will not use it in hearing of heavenly things. The only cause why you forget so fast as you hear, and of all the sermons which you have heard, have scarce the substance of one in your heart, to comfort or counsel you when you have need, is because you went from sermon to dinner, and never thought any more of the matter; as though it were enough to hear, like sieves which hold water no longer than they are in a river.

What a shame is this, to remember every clause in your lease, and every point in your father's will; nay, to remember an old tale so long as you live, though it be long since you heard it; and the lessons which ye hear now will be gone within this hour, that you may ask, What hath stolen my sermon from me? Therefore, that you may not hear us in vain, as you have heard others, my exhortation to you is, to record when you are gone that which you have heard. If I could teach you a better way, I would; but Christ's disciples used this way when their thoughts ran upon this speech, and made them come again to him to ask the meaning; the virgin his mother used this way when she pondered his sayings, and laid them up in her heart; the good hearers of Berea used this way, when they carried Paul's sermon home with them, that they might examine it by the Scripture. This difference is noted between Jacob and his sons: when Joseph uttered his dream, his brethren gave no regard to it; but it is said that father Jacob noted the saying, Gen. xxxvii. 11. Therefore this must needs be an excellent way. For if Joseph and Mary, and Christ's disciples, should speak unto you as I do, and shew you a way to hear, they would shew you the same way that they used themselves. You cannot tell how much it will

profit you until you practise it; do you try it one month, and if you love knowledge, I am sure you will use it while you live; but if you will not use it for all that can be said, truly you shall be like the old women which St Paul speaks of, which were 'always learning, and never the wiser,' 2 Tim. iii. 7.

This is our first lesson unto you, 'Take heed how you hear;' I may say now, take heed how you read too. For there are books abroad like Ishmael's scoffs, like Rabshakeh his railings, Isa. xxxvi., like the songs which were made against David, Ps. lxix. 12, which may write for the title of their books, *Fools in print.* If Hiel had not built Jericho again, 1 Kings xvi. 34, these might be fit workmen for such a frame.

If you must take heed how you hear, then we must take heed how we preach; for you hear that which we preach. Therefore Paul putteth none among the number of preachers, but they which 'cut the word aright,' 2 Tim. ii. 15; that is, in right words, in right sense, and in right method; and because none can do this without study and meditation, therefore he teacheth Timothy to 'give attendance to doctrine'; that is, to make a study and labour of it; for as Saint Peter saith, that in Paul's epistles, 'there be many things hard to understand,' 2 Peter iii. 16; so in Peter's epistles, and John's epistles, and James's epistle, there be many things too which David before called, 'the wonders of the law,' Ps. cxix., and Paul calleth, 'the mystery of salvation,' Eph. iii., and Christ calleth, 'a treasure hid in the ground.' Therefore Solomon confesseth, that he studied for his doctrines, Eccles xii. 10. Although he was the wisest and learnedest man that ever was, yet he thought that without study he could not do so much good. Daniel was a prophet, and yet he desired respite to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Dan. ii. 16. Is the Scripture lighter than a dream, that we should interpret it without meditation? It seems that Solomon and Daniel would not count them sermons, which come forth like untimely births, from uncircumcised lips, and unwashen hands, as though they had the Spirit at commandment. Wheat is good, but they which sell the refuse thereof are reproved, Amos viii. 6. So preaching is good, but this refuse of preaching is but like swearing; for one takes the name of God in vain, and the other takes the word of God in vain. As every sound is not music, so every sermon is not preaching, but worse than if he should read an homily. For if James would have us consider what we ask before we come to pray, much more should we consider before we come to preach; for it is harder to speak God's word, than to speak to God; yet there are preachers

risen lately up, which shroud every absurd sermon under the name of the simple kind of teaching, like the popish priests, which made ignorance the mother of devotion; but, indeed, to preach simply, is not to preach unlearnedly, nor confusedly, but plainly and perspicuously, that the simplest which doth hear, may understand what is taught, as if he did hear his name.

But if you will know why many preachers preach so barely, loosely, and simply, it is your own simplicity which makes them think that if they go on and say something, all is one, and no fault will be found; because you are not able to judge in or out; and so because they give no attendance to doctrine, as Paul teacheth them, it is almost come to pass, that in a whole sermon, the hearer cannot pick out one note more than he could gather himself; and many loathe preaching, as the Jews abhorred the sacrifice for the slubbering priests, which cared not what they offered; and the greater sort imagine that there is no more wisdom in the word of God, than their teachers shew out of it. What a shame is this, that the preachers should make preaching be despised! In Jeremiah xlviii., there is a curse upon them which do the business of the Lord negligently; if this curse do not touch them which do the chiefest business of the Lord negligently, it cannot take hold of any other. Therefore let every preacher first see how his notes do move himself, and then he shall have comfort to deliver them to others, like an experienced medicine, which himself hath proved.

Thus much of preaching, now to you which hear. Think that you are gathering manna, and that it is God which speaks unto you, and that you shall give account for every lesson which you hear; and therefore record like Mary when you are gone, and the seed which we sow shall grow faster than the seed which you sow.

# THE HEAVENLY THRIFT.

# THE HEAVENLY THRIFT.

*Whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which it seemeth that he hath.*—LUKE VIII. 18.

THE next words before are, 'Take heed how you hear;' the reason follows. To make us take heed how we hear, he saith, 'Whosoever hath,' &c. This sentence hath two hands, as it were; one giveth and the other taketh. Therefore, one calleth it a comfortable saying, and a dreadful saying; for it blesseth some and curseth other, like Moses, which saved the Israelites, and slew the Egyptians. 'Whosoever hath, to him shall be given;' there goeth the blessing: 'whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken;' there runneth the curse. Thus, looking back to the words before, viz., 'Take heed how ye hear,' this doctrine cometh unto us, that he which taketh heed how he heareth, sprouteth and flourisheth like a twig which hath life in it, till it come to a tree; but he which taketh no heed how he heareth, fadeth and withereth like a stock which is dead, until he hath not only lost the gifts which he had, but till the Spirit do leave him too, and he seem as naked to men as Adam did to God. The like sentence is in Mat. xxi., where it is said, 'The kingdom of heaven shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation which will bring forth the fruits thereof.' There is a taking from them which bring no fruits, and a giving to them which bring fruits. The like is in Rev. xxi., where it is said, 'Let him that is just be just still, and let him that is filthy be filthy still;' whereby it is meant that the just shall be more just, and the filthy shall be more filthy. The like is in John xv. 2, where it is said, 'Every branch which bringeth no fruit, he taketh away; but every branch which bringeth forth fruit, he purgeth, that it may bring forth more fruit.' The like is in Mat. xxv., where this sentence is repeated again after the parable of the talents. As to one servant were committed five talents, and to another two, and to another one, to in-

crease and multiply; and he which used his talent doubled it, and he which hid his talent lost it; even so to every man God hath given some gift, of judgment, of tongues, or interpretation, or counsel, to employ and do good; and he which useth that gift which God hath given him to the profit of others and God's glory, shall receive more gifts of God, as the servant which used two talents received two more; but he which useth it not, but abuseth it, as many do, that gift which he hath shall be taken from him, as the odd talent was from the servant which had but one, shewing that one gift is too much for the wicked, and therefore it shall not stay with him. One would think it should be said, Whosoever hath not, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath, from him shall be taken; for God biddeth us give to them which want. But this is contrary; for he taketh from them which want, and giveth to them which have. It is said that our thoughts are not like God's thoughts, and so our gifts are not like God's gifts; for he giveth spiritual things, and we give temporal things. Temporal things are to be given to them which have not, but spiritual things to them which have. Therefore Christ calleth none to receive his word, and Spirit, and grace, but them which hunger and thirst, which is the first possession of heaven. When it is said, 'It shall be given,' God sheweth himself rich and bountiful, because he giveth to them which have, that is, he giveth after he hath given; for 'What hath any that he hath not received?' Therefore none can say, as Esau said to Isaac, 'Hast thou but one blessing, my father?' for he blesseth when he hath blessed, as a spring runneth when it hath run. First, mark the growth of God's gifts in them which use them, how he watereth his seed like a gardener until it spring in the earth; and after he watereth it again, until it spring above the earth; and after he watereth it again, until it bring forth fruit upon the earth. Therefore God is called 'The Lord of the harvest,' Mat. ix. 38, because the seed, and the blade, and the ear, and the corn, and all do come from him. After, you shall see the want and the eclipse of their gifts which use them not, how their learning, and knowledge, and judgment doth betray them, as strength went from Samson when he had lost his hair, till at last they may say like Zedekiah, 'When did the Spirit depart from me?' 1 Kings xxii., when did love depart from me? when did knowledge depart from me? when did my zeal depart from me?

The first part of this sentence is like the gratulation to him which used his talent in Mat. xxv., 'Good and faithful servant, I will make thee lord over much.'

The second part is the objurgation to him which hid his talent,

'Naughty and slothful servant, take his talent from him.' So God beginneth here to separate between the sheep and the goats. Jacob shall not be cursed because Esau is cursed, neither shall Esau be blessed because Jacob is blessed; but the Lord knoweth who are his, and who are not; and therefore he saith, *Whosoever hath*, and *Whosoever hath not*, as though he knew them all, whosoever they be.

This scripture was performed before it was written. For when Adam served God, God served him; he consulted for a mansion for him; he consulted for meat for him; he consulted for a companion for him. Until Adam rebelled against God, we read of nothing that God did, but his works for Adam six days together, as though he had been hired to labour for him. But when he left his innocency, then God began to take again that which he had given him: he lost his wisdom, he lost his quietness, he lost his liberty, he lost his glory, he lost his dwelling, like the man which fell among thieves. Thus while Adam had righteousness, it might be said of him, 'Whosoever hath, to him shall be given.' And when he had not righteousness, it might be said of him too, 'From him which hath not shall be taken.' God is called a Father, because he is like a father, which taketh a pleasure to see his son thrive, and grieveth to see him an unthrift. First, he giveth us a stock, to prove our husbandry, and then if we thrive with that, he doth add more unto it, now a little, and then a little, until at last the inheritance come too. As they which try a vessel, first put water into it, to see whether it will hold water, then they commit wine into it; so, first, God giveth us one grace; if we use that well, then he giveth another, and another, and another; according to that, 'He which is found faithful in a little, shall be made lord over much.' 'My Father,' saith Christ, 'is an husbandman,' John xv.; shewing, that as we dress the ground, that it may bring forth fruit, so God dresseth us, that we may bring forth fruit. All cometh not at once, but as the body groweth, so the spirit groweth: first, good thoughts, and then good speeches, and then good works; as the blade followeth the seed, and the ear the blade, and the corn the ear. Look how in our first generation one thing comes after another; so it is in our second generation. As the child springeth in the mother's womb, from a jelly unto milk, and from milk to blood, and from blood to flesh, and she knoweth not how it groweth, till it come forth; so the spirit groweth in us, and we see not how it groweth, but that it is grown. Faith calleth to love, and love calleth to obedience, and obedience calleth to constancy, and one grace is the foundation of another. Therefore Paul saith, 'Whom he predestinated, them he

called; whom he called, them he justified; and whom he justified, them he glorified.' Thus, as the rich easily grow richer, so the good easily grow better. He which hath power to ask, hath power to receive; for it is said, 'Ask, and ye shall receive.' He which hath power to seek, hath power to find; for it is said, 'Seek, and you shall find.' He which hath power to knock, hath power to enter; for it is said, 'Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' As God's riches are infinite, so he is never weary of giving; when a man serveth God, at last it cometh to this, that God delighteth, as it were, to do him good; as it is said, Jer. xxxii., and Micah. vii., 'I will delight to do them good.'

Now, when it cometh to this pass, that God hath a delight to do a man good, 'then ask what thou wilt,' saith Solomon to his mother, 'and I will not say thee nay,' 1 Kings ii. 20; so ask what thou wilt, and God will not say thee nay. He which hath the Son, may have the Father; he which hath the wedding garment, may have the wedding feast; he which hath the spirit of Elisha, may have the spirit of Elijah; he which cometh unto Christ, may make Christ come unto him; as when the son came toward the father, the father met him in the way; shewing, that God is as ready to give, as we to ask. When David did well, Nathan said unto him, 'The Lord hath given thee this, and this, and this; and if that had not been enough, he would have given thee such and such things:' shewing us, that the cause why we have not such and such things is, for that we are not thankful for these and these things. When the eunuch believed, he said, 'What letteth me to be baptized?' Acts viii. So when thou believest, thou mayest say, What letteth me to be loved? what letteth me to be blessed? what letteth me to be saved? and as Philip said, 'Nothing;' so Christ saith 'Nothing,' but 'be it unto thee as thou believest.' From that day, righteousness standeth over their heads, as the sun did over Joshua, and they renew their virtues, as the eagle reneweth her youth. Therefore when Isaac had said, 'Jacob have I blessed,' he addeth, 'and he shall be blessed;' as if he should say, He beginneth to be blessed now, but he shall be more blessed; so they which are blessed of God, shall be more blessed, rising and rising like the sun, until it come to the height.

When God hath begun to bless, he saith as he said to Abraham, 'What shall I hide from him? what shall I keep from him?' as though one of his gifts did bind him to give another; therefore, his mercies are called 'everlasting mercies,' because when they begin they have no end. So soon as he had moved Solomon to pray for

wisdom, he gave him wisdom ; so soon as he had moved Abraham to go from his country, he began to guide him ; so soon as he had moved Gideon to fight, he began to strengthen him. God's mercies are resembled to rain: first it rains small drops, and after fall great drops, and the small are signs of the great. First you see Elisha with a single spirit, and after you see him with a double spirit ; first you see Paul sitting at Gamaliel's feet, and afterward you see him preaching in Moses's chair ; first you see Timothy a student, and after you see him an evangelist ; first you see Cornelius praying, and after you see Peter instructing ; first you see David repenting, and after you see Nathan comforting ; first you see the disciples worshipping, after you see the Holy Ghost descending ; first you see the wise men seeking Christ, and after you see them together with Christ ; first you see the son coming toward the father, and after you see the father coming toward the son ; first you see the eunuch reading, and after you see him understanding, and after you see him believing, and after you see him baptized. Most notable is the example of Nathanael: so soon as he believed, Christ remembered this promise and said, 'Believest thou for this ? thou shalt see greater things than these.' So he gave more to him which had some. That which he said to Nathanael, he saith to all which are like Nathanael, Believest thou this sermon ? thou shalt hear other sermons than this. Repentest thou for this example ? thou shalt see other examples than this. Lovest thou for one benefit ? thou shalt receive more benefits than one. Honourest thou God for his gifts upon others ? thou shalt feel his gifts upon thyself ; for 'he which keepeth Israel doth not sleep, but watch.' What doth he watch ? He watcheth *who* seeketh for comfort, and *who* looketh for wisdom, and *who* prayeth for faith, and *who* entreateth for patience, that he may give abundantly to him which desires fervently.

If he see one pray like Cornelius, he sendeth another to strengthen him, like Peter ; if he see one study like the eunuch, he sendeth another to instruct him, like Philip ; if he see one mourn like David, he sendeth another to comfort him, like Nathan ; if he see one willing like Isaiah, he sendeth another to enable him, like the seraphim; if he see one that thinketh well, he teacheth him to speak well ; if he see one that speaketh well, he teacheth him to do well ; if he see one do well, he teacheth him to continue well ; if he see one meek like Moses, he maketh him wise like Solomon ; if he see one wise like Solomon, he maketh him righteous like Abraham ; if he see one righteous like Abraham, he maketh him patient like Job :

if he see one patient like Job, he maketh him penitent like Peter; if he see one love one virtue, he maketh him love another virtue; if he see one hate one vice, he maketh him hate another vice; if he see one like one sermon, he maketh him like another sermon. When he hath him in his school, and he cometh once to this, to say like Samuel, 'Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth,' 1 Sam. iii., then he taketh him up to the mount like Moses, and openeth his heart unto him, teaching him a way to make use of all that he seeth, and of all that he heareth, and of all that he readeth, and of all that he feeleth. Thus, when God hath strained and fined him, he is apt to every good work, and takes all occasions to do them. If he but see one pray, his heart burneth to pray too; if he see one reading, he hath a mind to read too; if he see one meditating, he hath a zeal to meditate too; if he see one sorrowing, he hath a desire to sorrow too. Like the disciples, when they heard Peter say, We go a-fishing, they said, We will go a-fishing too. After this, every benefit maketh him thankful, every instruction maketh him fearful, and he is never well but when he is walking with God, like Enoch, or when Christ is speaking to him, or when he is speaking to Christ; for when God meeteth with his children, like a nurse he emptieth himself of his milk: according to this text which we now handle, 'To him which hath shall be given.'

Thus, when you use those gifts well which you have, the Lord will come unto you, and say, that your heart may hear him, 'Good servant and faithful, I will make thee lord over much;' thy seed shall become a tree, thy spirit shall be doubled. First, thou shalt have a love to hear, read, and meditate; after thou shalt have a little knowledge to judge and speak of God's word, of the Spirit, and of doctrines; then thou shalt ascend to faith, which will bring thee unto peace of conscience; then thou shalt meet with good books, and God will send thee teachers to instruct thee, and encourage thee, like the angels which came to Christ when he hungered. Thus a traveller passeth from town unto town, until he come to his inn; so a Christian passeth from virtue to virtue, until he come to heaven, which is the journey that every man must endeavour to go till death.

It followeth, 'And whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken, even that which it seemeth that he hath.'

As the Lord saith to his faithful servant, 'Thou shalt be ruler over much,' so he saith of his slothful servant, 'Take his talent from him.' Here is one like Jacob whom God loveth, 'To him,' he saith, 'shall be given;' here is another like Esau whom God hateth, 'From

him,' he saith, 'shall be taken.' So one may say like Job, 'The Lord hath given;' and the other may say like Job, 'The Lord hath taken.' But from whom doth he take? 'From him which hath not.' And to whom doth he give? 'To him which hath.' In this God seemeth not to deal his gifts charitably; for he should give to them which want. Joseph marvelled to see Jacob lay his left hand upon Manasseh, and his right hand upon Ephraim, as though the younger should be more blessed than the elder. Jesse marvelled to see Samuel choose the least of his sons before the tallest, as though the unfittest were the fittest; so it is marvel that he which commandeth us to give unto them which want, should take from them which want, and give to them which have. Isaac would not have blessed Jacob but Esau, but God would have him bless Jacob and not Esau; Joseph would that Manasseh should have more than Ephraim, but God would that Ephraim should have more than Manasseh. As God loveth not as man loveth, so he giveth not as man giveth. Why should Abraham have three angels, and Lot but two, and Balaam but one, and Balak none? Why should not Philip go up the mount as well as James? Why should not Aaron behold God as well as Moses? Why should not Moses go to Canaan as well as Caleb?

According to our love is God's love, and according to our hatred is God's hatred. Reuben should have had as good a blessing as Judah, but when Jacob blessed him, Gen. xlix. 4, he remembered his sin with Bilhah, Gen. xxxv. 22, and therefore curbed his blessing; for when he blessed him, he said, 'Thou shalt not be excellent;' as if he should say, Reuben, thou shalt have something, but thou shalt not have so much as thou shouldest have had, because of th uncleanness with Bilhah. So Moses should have gone to Canaan as well as Caleb, but God remembered his murmuring at the water of bitterness; and when he desired to go unto it, God would not hear him, but let him see it from an hill, and so he died. So the third servant should have received as many talents as his fellows; but the Lord remembered how he hid the talent which he had, and therefore would give him no more, lest he should hide them too; so we should have more understanding, more judgment, and more knowledge; but God seeth what we do with this, and therefore stayeth his hand, lest we should abuse any more. This is St John's meaning when he saith, John i. 16, 'God giveth grace for grace;' that is, where he finds one grace, there he giveth another. This is St Paul's meaning, Rom. i., where he saith, 'The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith;' signifying, that they which have faith shall have more faith. Therefore, this is the fearfulest

sign that we have no faith, nor grace, if God do not increase our faith, and his graces in us; for 'to him which hath shall be given.' Therefore, if we had faith, we should have love; if we had love, we should have knowledge; if we had knowledge, we should have zeal; if we had zeal, we should have holiness. As he which hath broken one commandment is made guilty of all, so he which hath one virtue is made partaker of all. It is said, so long as Jehoiada lived Joash prospered and did well, 2 Chron. xxiv., because Jehoiada instructed and guided him; but when Jehoiada died, Joash's goodness died with him, and he was never like himself after, but turned like his fathers. So there is a seed in the heart, which while it liveth and is fostered, we sprout and prosper, as Joash did; but when that seed dieth for want of cherishing, then we begin to droop and fade, and decay again, as Joash did. If one virtue be offended, she lureth all her fellows from us, as many of Ishbosheth's friends shrunk with Abner.

David setteth forth the godly man, 'like a tree planted by the water's side, which sprouteth and groweth, and bringeth forth fruit,' Ps. i. 3. Straight upon this, he saith, 'It is not so with the wicked.' When he spake of growing, and flourishing, and fructifying, he saith, 'It is not so with the wicked;' that is, it is contrary with the wicked, therefore their gifts are not like 'the tree planted by the water's side,' but like 'the chaff which the wind bloweth away.' Nay, saith David, themselves are 'like chaff which the wind bloweth away.' If they be chaff, then their fruit is chaff. The glutton's table was for the ungodly, Luke xvi., but the Lord's table was for the holy, therefore he which had not the wedding garment, Mat. xxii., had not the wedding feast. For if the Lord would cast pearls unto swine, why doth he forbid us to do so? Therefore it is not said, 'Be it unto thee as thou desirest,' lest all should look to receive; but, 'Be it unto thee as thou believest,' that all might care to believe. It is not said to them that seek not, Ye shall find, but 'Seek, and you shall find.' How should they enter, which have not a hand to knock at the door? How should they receive, which have no tongue to ask the giver? How should they have wisdom, which have not 'the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom'? Prov. i. Thus, as James saith, 'Shew me thy faith and I will shew thee my faith;' so God saith, Shew me thy love, and I will shew thee my love. As Christ was known at Emmaus, by breaking of bread, so you may know him here by dealing his gift. It is said when Joseph feasted his brethren, Benjamin's mess had five times more than any of his brethren, because Joseph loved him

more than the rest, Gen. xliii. So the mercy and graces of God will shew to whom his affection standeth. If you see Christ leaning on a man's breast, as John did on Christ's breast, then may you say, This is a beloved disciple; for as Lydia persuaded Paul and Silas to come to her house, saying, 'If you judge me to be faithful, come to my house,' Acts xvi. 15, so you may judge them to be faithful to whose house the Lord cometh. If you ask Solomon to whom the Lord giveth wisdom and knowledge, he answereth, 'To a man which is good in his sight,' Eccles. ii. 26, shewing that those men are gracious in God's sight, as Joseph was in Pharaoh's. Contrariwise, if you see God flying from a man, as David fled from Saul, that is, withdrawing his Spirit, as the master did his talent, then you may say, This is not a faithful servant to his Master; for if he had used his talent well, the Lord would increase it, as he promised; but because he doth abuse it, therefore the Lord doth withdraw it again, as he threatened.

To some God giveth, and never recalleth again; to some he giveth, and after taketh it from them. As some angels went up the ladder, and some went down, so some men's gifts increase, and some decrease. In Eph. iv. you have God giving; in Mat. xxi. you have him taking. In Gen. i. you have God blessing; in Gen. iv. you have God cursing. In Acts xxvi. you have God opening eyes; in Isaiah you have God shutting eyes. In Daniel ii. you have God making wise; in Isa. xliv. you have God making fools. In John xv. you have God dressing trees; in Mat. iii. you have God hewing down trees. When one sea floweth another ebbeth; when one star riseth another setteth; when light is in Goshen, darkness is in Egypt; when Mordecai groweth into favour, Haman groweth out of favour; when Benjamin beginneth, Rachel endeth. Thus we are rising or setting, getting or spending, winning or losing, growing or fading, until we arrive at heaven or hell. As Elisha his spirit was doubled, so Saul's spirit departed. As the Gentiles become believers, so the Jews become infidels. As Saul becometh an apostle, so Judas becometh an apostate. As John groweth in the spirit, so Joash decayeth in the spirit. As Zaccheus turneth *from* the world, so Demas turneth *to* the world. As Lydia's heart is opened, Acts xvi., so Pharaoh's heart is hardened, even as the thorns burn while the vines fructify. When Ishbosheth was asleep upon his bed, Baanah and Rechab came and took away his life; so while men sleep and do no good, God cometh and taketh away their gifts. It was never said, Samson hath lost his strength, until he hearkened unto Delilah. It was never said, Saul hath

lost his Spirit, until he hearkened not to Samuel. It was never said, 'Take his talent from him,' until he hid it in the ground. One sin openeth the door for many virtues to go out. While Jacob stayed with Laban, Laban's cattle increased, because God blessed him for Jacob's sake; but when Jacob went from him, many of Laban's sheep went with him, and he grew poor again; so while the love of righteousness is with thee, to husband thy knowledge and wisdom like Jacob, thou shalt thrive in graces, and one day shall teach another; but when that steward departeth from thee, then look that thy wisdom, and knowledge, and judgment should decrease, as fast as the widow's oil increased. The world will win the flesh, and the flesh will win the spirit, and one sin will cry to another, as the Moabites did at the river, 'Now Moab to the spoil,' now sins to your spoil; then thy knowledge shall fly, as though it were afraid to be taken captive of ignorance, thy love shall not abide thy hatred, thy humility shall not abide thy pride, thy temperance shall not abide thy concupiscence. As thou seest the leaves fall from the trees in a boisterous wind, so thy graces shall drop away one ofter another, as though thou wert in a consumption. As the ark would not stay with the Philistines, so the grace of God will not stay with sinners, but flieth from them like persecutors. David was not so ready to fly from Saul, but the Spirit was as ready to fly from him too. This must come upon all which sin like Samson, their strength must depart from them, until they learn like Nebuchadnezzar from whence it came, Dan. iv. This sentence is such a meditation, that he which would preach it to the quick, had need to have an eye in all men's hearts, to see how one virtue dieth after another, until the soul die too.

As there is a fall of leaves, and an eclipse of the sun, and a consumption of the body, so there is a fall of gifts, and an eclipse of knowledge, and a consumption of the spirit. It is strange to see how wisdom, and knowledge, and judgment do shun the wicked, as though they were afraid to be defiled. As Barak would not go unless Deborah would go with him, so knowledge will not stay unless virtue will stay with her. To this Jeremiah pointed when he mocked the Jews for saying, 'Knowledge shall not depart from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet,' Jer. xviii. 18. To this Isaiah pointed when he saith, 'The wisdom of the wise men shall perish, and the understanding of the prudent shall be hid,' Isa. xxix. 14, as if he should say, One day Christ will tell you, that 'whosoever hath not, from him,' &c. And when you hear that saying, then remember these examples, how he hath

fulfilled it before. After come the apostles, and they shew some 'hardened,' some 'bewitched,' some 'blinded.' Paul tells how Demas 'fell away,' and John sheweth how 'many fell away.' Thus the prophets and apostles on either side, and Christ in the midst, hold up this threatening, as if it were a pit, which all are falling into. The soul of man is called 'the temple of the Holy Ghost.' As God pulled down his temple when it became a den of thieves, so he forsaketh the temple of the soul, and taketh his grace from her, as from a divorced spouse, when it lusteth after other loves. With any talent he giveth this charge, 'Use and increase it until I come;' being left, at last he cometh again to see what we have done. The seed was sown, this year the Lord calls for fruit, and none will come; the next year, and the next after, and none comes; at last the curse goeth forth, 'Never fruit grow upon thee more.' Then as the fig-tree began to wither, so his gifts begin to pair,[1] as if a worm were still gnawing at them; his knowledge loseth his relish, like the Jews' manna; his judgment rusts like a sword which is not used; his zeal trembleth as though it were in a palsy; his faith withereth as though it were blasted, and the image of death is upon all his religion. After this he thinketh like Samson to pray as he did, and speak as he did, and hath no power, but wondereth like Zedekiah, how the Spirit is gone from him. Now when the good Spirit is gone, then cometh the spirit of blindness, and the spirit of error, and the spirit of fear, and all to seduce the spirit of man. After this, by little and little, first he falls into error, then he comes unto heresy, at last he plungeth into despair; after this, if he inquire, God will not suffer him to learn; if he read, God will not suffer him to understand; if he hear, God will not suffer him to remember; if he pray, God seemeth unto him like Baal, which could not hear; at last he beholdeth his wretchedness, as Adam looked upon his nakedness, and mourneth for his gifts; as Rachel wept for her children, 'because they were not.' All this cometh to pass, that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'Whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken that which he seemeth to have.' As the ship sinketh upon the sea while the merchant sporteth upon the land, and makes him a bankrupt when he thinketh that his goods are coming in; so while we are secure, and the heart spendeth, and the ear bringeth not in, by little and little the stock decayeth, and more become bankrupts in religion than in all trades beside. When a man sinneth, he thinketh with himself, I will do this no more; after, another sin promiseth as much profit as that, and he saith

[1] Qu. 'fade'?—Ed.

again, I will do this no more; presently another sin promiseth as much profit as that, and he saith again, I will do this, and no more. There goeth strength, and there cometh a wound; so the soul bleedeth to death, and knoweth not her sickness till she be at the last gasp. Even as a man undresseth himself to bed, first he casteth off his cloak, then his coat, and then his doublet, so when God rifleth our hearts, he pulleth away one feather after another; first he wounds his faith, after he strikes his love, then he blindeth his knowledge, then he shall have no delight to hear the word; after, he shall grow to hate the preachers of the word; at last, he shall even hate the word itself. This is the bleeding of the soul, or the spiritual consumption, when graces drop away, as the hairs fall from an hoary head before death. Let Ahithophel be a spectacle for all to fear: he was counted a wise man and a deep counsellor, yet because it was the wisdom of the flesh, the story saith that God turned his wisdom into folly; and that he might seem foolish (as he was indeed), God made him to hang himself, whereby his folly was more notorious than his wisdom. But most notable is the example of persecuting Saul; when he began to fall, he ran headlong. First he fell in hatred of David, then he fell in hatred of God, after God fell in hatred of him; anon the Spirit departed from him; at last he sought for help at witches, which he had condemned before. This is the property of sin, to spur a man forward until he commit that which he condemneth himself, that he may be tormented of his own conscience. Now, if I might apply this scripture, as Christ saith, Are there no more sinners but they upon whom the tower of Siloam fell? so I may say, Is the talent taken from none but from him which hid it in the ground? Nay, Saul was but a type of many which should lose the Spirit; Samson was but a type of many which should lose their strength; Demas was but a type of many which should embrace the world. As David crieth, 'How are the mighty overthrown!' so we may mourn and say, How are the zealous cooled! how are the diligent tired! They which should season others, are become like the white of an egg, which hath no taste; once they seemed to have fruit, but now they are not hanged with leaves. As God cried unto Adam, 'Adam, where art thou?' so they may cry, Zeal, where art thou? Learning, where art thou? Conscience, where art thou? Love, where art thou? They which shined like the sun when they rose, seem now to be eclipsed of their light. The world hath won the flesh, the flesh hath won the spirit, and 'Jordan is turned back.' As God took heat from the fire when it would burn his children, so he

taketh knowledge from the learned when they turn it to evil. Now, when they see such ruins of their gifts, with what heart can they think, I am the tree whom Christ accurseth; or, I am the servant of whom it is said, 'Take his talent from him'? Therefore I say to you, as Christ said, 'Remember Lot's wife;' as her body was turned into salt, so your wisdom may turn into folly, your knowledge may turn into ignorance, your understanding may turn into blindness, your zeal may turn into coldness; therefore let all which have a talent take heed how they use it. Three things I note in these words, and then I end: First, Christ saith not, It shall be taken from them which have, but from them which 'seem to have.' Lest they which stand should fear to fall, Paul saith not, Let him which standeth take heed lest he fall, but 'Let him which thinketh he standeth;' so, lest they which have the Spirit should fear, Christ saith, 'It shall be taken from them which seem to have.' Mark how warily the Scripture speaketh; for this speech doth shew that many shall fall, and yet it doth shew that none shall fall but they which seem to stand; that none shall lose the Spirit but they which seem to have it. For if Christ would take from them which have, as he giveth to them which have, he would not say, *They which seem to have* at his taking, no more than he said at his giving. So we have a comfort in this terror, like the honey which Samson found in the lion's jaws; for if God will take from none but them which seem to have, then we need not fear unless we be hypocrites, for the threatening is made to none but them which seem. Secondly, This speech doth shew that many have that show of holiness which Paul speaketh of, wherewith they would deceive God, and deceive themselves. You have Pilate washing his hands in hypocrisy, as well as you have David washing his hands in innocency. You have the Shechemites with their circumcision, as well as the Israelites with their circumcision. You have the Sadducees with their doctrine, as well as the apostles with their doctrine. You have the pharisee with his prayer, as well as the publican with his prayer. You have the Pythonist with her confession, as well as Peter with his confession. You have the exorcists with their Jesus, Acts viii., as well as Paul with his Jesus. You have Satan with his scripture, Mat. iv., as well as Christ with his scripture. You have Judas with his kiss, as well as Jonathan with his kiss. You have Cain with his sacrifice, as well as Abel with his sacrifice. You have Esau with his tears, as well as Mary with her tears. You have Ahithophel with his wisdom, as well as Solomon with his wisdom. You have Zedekiah with his spirit, as well as Elijah with

his spirit. You have Jezebel with her fasts, as well as Anna with her fasts. You have the harlot with her vows, as well as Jacob with his vow. Of all these the scripture is fulfilled, 'That which they seemed to have was taken from them.'

This is the first note, the very show of godliness shall be taken from them which have not goodness itself. Lest men should content themselves with shows and shadows, Christ saith, 'That which he seems to have shall be taken from him;' as if he should say, Take away his talent, and his napkin too, that he may not seem to have a talent; as Moses saith, 'I will not leave a hoof behind.' Thou shalt not seem just, nor wise, nor honest, but I will make thee as naked to men as Adam was to me. Even as the fig-tree, because it had no fruit, was spoiled of his leaves, which shewed like fruit; so they which have made shipwreck of honesty, shall make shipwreck of credit too. Their name shall go with a brand upon it, like Cain the murderer, Achan the thief, Absalom the rebel, Magus the sorcerer. Judas had for his title, 'Judas which betrayed the Lord,' Acts i. Jeroboam had for his title, 'Jeroboam which made Israel to sin.' Demas had for his title, 'Demas which embraced the world.' Mark how sin doth persecute and vex the sinner. Indeed, Demas had embraced the world, but he would not have the world to know it; but see first how God makes Paul to know it, and after, he makes him to proclaim it; that now Demas is not only an hypocrite, but known to be an hypocrite, like a rogue which is burned in the ear. When Jeroboam's wife came to the prophet to inquire of her son, she disguised herself, because she would not be known; yet the prophet knew her, for so soon as she knocked at the door, he called, 'Come in, Jeroboam's wife;' so though men disguise themselves with sober countenances, and holy speeches, and honest company, because they would not be known, yet when God seeth an hypocrite, he will pull his vizor from his face, as Adam was stripped of his fig-leaves, and shew the anatomy of his heart, as though his life were written in his forehead; and he shall marvel how men know that which he scarce thought had been known to God.

Thus he which hath made the day, can bring forth thy righteousness like the light; he which hath made the night, can bring forth thy wickedness like the dark. Therefore Solomon saith, 'The candle of the wicked shall be put out;' that is, the least light that he hath shall be quenched, Prov. xv.

Thus you see how God will increase your gifts if you use them, and how God will decrease them if you use them not. Now let us pray that he will teach us this use, that we may receive his blessing.

# THE MAGISTRATES' SCRIPTURE.

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*I have said, Ye are gods; and ye are all the children of the Most High: but ye shall die as a man, and ye princes shall die like others.*—Ps. LXXXII. 6, 7.

I MAY call this text, *the Magistrates' Scripture;* considering the state of kings and governors, how much good they might do, and how little they perform, God becomes a remembrancer unto them. And first, shews what a high calling princes and rulers have, and then, lest they should be proud of it, and make their magistracy a chair of ease, he turns upon them again, as though he had another message unto them, and tells them, that though they be above others, yet they shall die like others; and though they judge here, yet they shall be judged hereafter, and give account of their stewardship, how they have governed, and straightway their subjects, how they have obeyed. A good memorandum for all in authority, so to deal in this kingdom, that they lose not the kingdom to come.

*I have said, Ye are gods, &c.* How can he call them gods, which calls himself the only God? and saith, There are no more gods but he, Isa. xliv. 6, xlv. 21. 'I have made thee Pharaoh's god,' saith God to Moses, Exod. vii. 1, because he had given him power to speak unto Pharaoh in his name, and to execute his judgments upon him; so he calleth magistrates gods, because he hath given them power to speak to the people in his name, and to execute his judgments upon them. Out of this name rulers may learn how to govern, and subjects how to obey. As the inferior magistrates do nothing but as the superior magistrate prescribeth, so they which rule under God, for God, must rule by the prescript of God, and do nothing but as their conscience tells them that God would do him-

self. Therefore they which use their power against God, which bear the person of God and execute the will of the devil, which make laws against God's law, and be enemies to his servants, are worse than Balaam, which would not curse whom God blessed, Num. xxii. 18; and so much as in them lieth, make God a liar, because they cannot so well be called gods, as devils. Such gods go to hell.

*I have said, Ye are gods,* &c. First, this name informs us what kind of rulers and magistrates we should choose; those which excel all other men, like gods among men. For a king should be a man after God's own heart, like David, as appeareth in the first book of Samuel, the thirteenth chapter, and fourteenth verse. As all those whom God set over his people in his mercy, and not in his anger, had some note of excellency above the rest, which God chose them by, as it were the magistrate's mark; the mildest man, Num. xii. 3; or the wisest man, 1 Kings iv. 31; or the justest man, Heb. vii. 2; as though if all these had met in one, the inquisition should have stayed there, and all give place to him; but our virtues are so singled, that he which was called the mildest, is not called the wisest; and he which was called the wisest, is not called the justest; as though God found some defect in his own election. For when he chose one mild, another wise, and another just, he shewed that he would have one which is mild, and wise, and just like himself; that is, (as I may say) a man made even in print.

As Paul biddeth to 'choose widows which were widows indeed,' 1 Tim. v. 3, so we should choose magistrates which are magistrates indeed; that is, such as seem to be sent of God for that purpose, as Pharaoh chose Joseph, because he was the fittest in all the land, Gen. xli. 38. Elisha thought that the single spirit was not enough, but required that the spirit of Elijah might be doubled upon him, because he was a prophet which should teach others, 2 Kings ii. 9; so we should pick out them which have a double spirit to be magistrates, because they must govern others; as God picked forth Joshua in Moses's room; he might have chosen many out of all Israel, which had the spirit of wisdom; but he chose Joshua, of whom he saith, that he was 'full of the spirit of wisdom,' Deut. xxxiv. 9, shewing that if one be better than another, he should be chosen before the rest, because the best have said, Send another, Exod. iv. 13, as though none were fit; but for want of angels we are fain to make magistrates of men. Therefore, as Samuel went over all the sons of Jesse, to anoint a successor to Saul, 1 Sam. xvi. 5, and put back one after another which thought themselves fit, yet there was but one amongst them which pleased God, and the

prophet could scarce discern him; so necessary it is, that this choice be committed to none but to the godly, because he which would have chosen the best, yet liked another before him. Therefore there was such a scrutiny amongst the tribes to find out the man whom God had chosen, as Jethro taught Moses to cull out of all the people those which 'had best courage, and feared God, and dealt truly, and hated covetousness,' Exod. xviii. 21. Therefore a wicked man may not supply the place of God, as the scribes and pharisees sat in Moses's chair, Mat. xxiii. 2; but as it is said of Judas, 'Let another take his place,' Acts i. 20, so let better take their place, for they which are called gods must be like God. If all should be 'holy as he is holy,' 1 John iii. 3, how much more should *they* be pure as he is pure, wise as he is wise, just as he is just, which bear his name, which supply his person, and guide the world unto good or evil. If the race should be to the swift, and the battle to the strong, Eccles. ix. 11, then, as Saul did exceed all the men of Israel from the shoulders upward, 1 Sam. ix. 2, so he which commands others, should exceed others in gifts of grace, that they may know him from the rest, and say, This is he, for he exceeds the rest in virtue as Saul did in stature, like the king of bees, which is the fairest of all the hive. Therefore, if Pharaoh would let none but Joseph govern Egypt, Gen. xli. 38, Pharaoh shall rise up against those kings, which care not whom they place over their people, imitating Rehoboam, which made them his companions, whom he should have expelled from his court, 1 Kings xii. 8.

Secondly, This extolleth the calling of magistrates. As Jacob honoured Joseph's children, when he said they should be called after his name, Gen. xlviii. 16; so God honoureth the magistrates when he gives them his own name, calling them gods, as though there were a kind of godhead in them. 'These things pertain to the wise,' Prov. xxiv. 23, and they themselves do not always see it; yet he which hath a spiritual eye, and carries the pattern of God in his heart, may see another likeness of God in magistrates, than in common persons. As the builders of the temple had a special wisdom and spirit, which God gave them for that work which they were chosen to, Exod. xxxi. 3 and xxxv. 31, so when Samuel had anointed David, he saith, that 'the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward,' 1 Sam. xvi. 13, as though he had another spirit after than he had before. There is a difference between kings and inferior magistrates; for the prince is like a great image of God, the magistrates are like little images of God, appointed to rule for God, to make laws for God, to reward for God,

to punish for God, to speak for God, to fight for God, to reform for God, and therefore their battles are called 'The Lord's battles;' and their judgments, 'The Lord's judgments;' and their throne, 'The Lord's throne;' and the kings themselves, 'His kings,' to shew that they are all for God, like his hands. By some he teacheth mercy, by some justice, by some peace, by some counsel, as Christ distributed the loaves and the fishes by the hands of his disciples, Mat. xiv. 18. This God requires of all when he calls them gods, to rule as he would rule, judge as he would judge, correct as he would correct, reward as he would reward, because it is said, that they are instead of the Lord God; that is, to do as he would do, as a scholar writes by a copy. This is a good study for magistrates in all their judgments, to consider what God would do, because they are instead of God, I rule for God, I speak for God, I judge for God, I reward for God, I correct for God; then as he would do and determine, so must be my sentence. As we should think how Christ prayed before we pray, and how he spake before we speak, because his actions are our instructions, Mat. xi. 29; so they should think how Christ would judge before they judge, because God's law is appointed for their law, Deut. xvii. 10. Such a thought must needs level the way before them, and put them in mind of a good, and just, and holy judgment, because God is good, and just, and holy.

Thirdly, They are called gods, to teach them how they should govern. Howsoever other care for the glory of God, the performance of his will, the reformation of his church, princes and rulers, which are gods themselves, are to do the business of God as their own business, because they are gods. God's business is their business, God's law is their law, God's honour is their honour. When the king, or judge, or magistrate, doth seek the kingdom and glory of God, he should think he seeketh his own kingdom and glory, and therefore seek it, and further it, as earnestly and diligently as he would his own; and rule, and judge, and speak, and punish, and counsel, as he would for himself; even as David counted God's foes his foes, and God's friends his friends, Ps. cxxxix. 21; and Moses persecuted them that were idolaters against God, Exod. xlii. 27, as he did them which were traitors to himself, Num. xvi. 16.

If this were observed, we should see such a change, that divers which take should give, and they which give should take; they which labour should rest, and they which rest should labour. How can they pray to God, which know that the laws of God are not obeyed; that his will is not regarded; but the poor unpitied, because of their remissness in not bridling the insolent? It may

seem that in Elijah his answer to Ahab, it was prophesied who should trouble Israel to the world's end; for speaking to the wicked magistrate he said, 'It is thou which troublest it,' 1 Kings xviii. 18. So the ungodly rulers, and graceless strivers against lawful rule, in their own hearts calling themselves gods, not being so called of God, are cause of all disorder in every commonweal.

Fourthly, They are called gods, to encourage them in their office, and to teach them that they need not dread the persons of men; but as God doth that which is just and good without the jealousy of men, so they, upon the bench, and in all causes of justice, should forget themselves to be men, which are led by the arms between favour and fear, and think themselves gods, which fear nothing. This boldness is so necessary in them which should judge all alike, that in Deut. iii. 28, Moses encouraged Joshua. In Josh. i. 18, the people enourage him; in verse 9, God doth encourage him, saying, that he will be with him; but here he is with him; for hearing God call them gods, shews that God is there, nay, that they are he, which should strike a wonderful mind in them. As a princely spirit came upon Saul so soon as he was a king, so hearing that they are gods, it should change them, and make them excel the order of men, until they resemble God, after whom they are named; as Solomon studied and prayed till he was wiser than all that he governed, 1 Kings iii. 6, iv. 33; then they need not blush to read this testimony, 'I have said, Ye are gods;' or else it will seem a check unto them, like the mock which God gave unto Adam, when he said, that he was become like himself, Gen. iii. 22. As many sit in God's place, and yet never knew that the Scripture called them gods, nor why they have this name no more than Nabal; so many play Nabal in their offices, and are readier to ask, Who is David? 1 Sam. xxv. 26, Who is Christ? than, when his cause comes before them, speak or do anything for him. But the women go before them again like Abigail, as though God would shame them with the weaker vessel. I cannot compare them fitter than with king Agrippa, who thought it better to be a Christian almost, than altogether. This is the religion of these times: they fear nothing more than to be counted too precise; but God doth call them more than precise, for he calls them gods; of all men they should not forget his name. Princes and rulers have many names of honour, but this is the honourablest name in their titles, that they are called gods; other names have been given them of men for reverence, or flattery, but no man could give them this name but God himself. Therefore their name is a glass wherein they may see their duty,

how God doth honour them, and how they should honour him. What am I more than he, that God should set me in his own chair, and give me his own name, and more than others! He hath not done so to all; but if they which are called his children are happy, they which are called his disciples are happy, Mat. v.; they which are called his servants are happy, 1 Sam. xviii. 23; how happy are they whom he calleth gods! It seems, that if God could have called them by a higher name than his own, he would have called them by some other name; but this word is enough to put them in mind of all that they should do. Think that ye are gods, and it will make you ashamed to obey the devil; for then ye are like gods no more, but like sinful men; and the poorest vassal which serves God in a cottage, is liker God than you. Are they gods which oppress God's children? Nay, doth he not lie which calls them *worshipful*, or *noble?* If such deserve not their titles, how can antichrist of Rome think of his usurped names, and not be abashed? Can he sit down in God's place and speak against him, judge against him, decree against him, even in the temple of God resisting God? 2 Thes. ii. 4.

Again, for another sort of gods: Doth iniquity become gods? Doth partiality become gods? Doth bribes become gods? They are greedy gods, idol gods, belly gods, and may be termed gods, because they are like 'the god of this world,' 2 Cor. iv. 4, which do but stay (like Nebuchadnezzar), until their iniquity be full, that they may be cast out like beasts, as a derision to them they govern, Dan. iv. But they which regard this honourable testimony of God, as Nehemiah said when he was tempted to fly, 'Should such a man as I fly?' Neh. vi. 11, so when they are tempted with bribes, Should such a man as I take bribes? Should such a man as I do wrong? Should such a man as I be a liar, or a swearer, or a scoffer, or a drunkard, or a gamester, or an usurer, or a profaner, upon whom all eyes are set to take their example, and to whom they would hearken sooner than to God himself? Then he resolveth to rule according to his name; knowing that all the souls which might be won by him shall be required of him, as the sins of Israel were imputed to Jeroboam, 1 Kings xv. 30.

Thus God doth catechize them in their own names, and calls them gods, to teach them their duty to God. All should be godly, but they should be like God; that (as I may say), more than godly, or the next to God in godliness. If any come between them, they lose all their honour, and would think themselves put down, like a guest which is set lower, or a justice which is turned out of office.

For so God doth humble them, and disgrace them, which dishonour their calling, as he did Saul when the princely spirit departed from him. His sons and his daughters, and his subjects did favour David more than him, that he could do nothing with them. Because God did not love him, he would not let his servants love him, 1 Sam. xxii. 7, 1 Sam. xix. 4, 1 Sam. xviii. 7, 1 Sam. xxii. 17. But when David came to the crown, because he had grace with God, he prospered in all that he went about, and ever reformed what he would, 2 Sam. v. 10; for the Lord (as he said) 'subdued the people unto him,' Ps. xviii. 47; that is, made them incline to his will. As we read of Saul, in the beginning of his reign, before he had rebelled, 'a band of men did cleave to him,' of whom it is said, 'whose hearts God had touched,' 1 Sam. x. 26; as though while the rulers' hearts do stand toward God, the peoples' hearts should stand towards them, and they should carry them like God to all their desires; as it is said of David, 'Whatsoever the king did, pleased all the people,' 2 Sam. iii. 36.

Therefore, looking into this divine ordinance, what a power they have over the people, which they should never have got from men, if God had not given it them. I have thought it an easier matter to redress an hundred things which trouble Christendom without reason, and none would kick against it, if these gods would cast down their crowns, and begin to the rest; for all stay upon them, like the alarm which soundeth first to the battle; for our experience shows, that there will be no great good done, if the example of the best give not light unto the rest.

Oh! would that princely spirit would once come upon them to go before the people, which Moses appointed for the King's place, Num. xxvii. 17, and not lag after them like Herod, which said he would come after the wise men to Christ, Mat. ii. 8; for if Nicodemus came by night, John iii. 1, no marvel though the rest came not at all. Thus their name tells them how they should rule, and by consequence teacheth how we should obey. God calls them gods, therefore he which contemneth them, contemneth God; God calls them fathers, therefore we must reverence them like fathers; God calls them kings, princes, lords, judges, powers, rulers, governors, which are names of honour; and shall we dishonour them whom God doth honour? Our first lesson is, 'Fear God;' the next is, 'Honour the king,' Prov. xxiv. 21, 1 Peter ii. 17; that is (as Paul interpreteth), we must 'obey for conscience,' Rom. xiii. 5, not against conscience; for that were to put a stranger before the king, and the king before God, which, Christ saith, have

no power but from God, John xix. 11; and therefore cannot make themselves magistrates, Heb. v. 4, no more than they can make themselves gods. As none could give this name but God, so no man which exalteth himself can challenge this honour, no more than Simon Magus was great, because he called himself a great man, Acts viii. 9. But they to whom God saith, I have called ye gods, as if he had the naming and appointing of them. 'Every power is from God,' Rom. xiii. 2; for by nature no man can challenge power over other, but by the word; and therefore every soul which is subject to God, must be subject to them, 1 Peter ii. 13; for he which calls them kings, calls us subjects; this is their patent (as the queen of Sheba said to Solomon), 2 Chron. ix. 3, that God had chosen them kings, and set them upon the throne. As he said, and all things were made, Gen. i.; so as he saith, all things should be, Jer. xxvii. 12. Therefore, unless ye hear this, *I say*, ye that are lords, judges, and magistrates, ye are no lords, no judges, no magistrates of God. And therefore the pope and his clergy, to whom God never said, Ye are lords, or judges, or magistrates; are no lords, no judges, no magistrates of God; but that which the Lord saith they are, that they are, and no more, though they put on a triple crown. If they were worthy to be called, as others, pastors, doctors, and teachers, we would give them those titles. They which give them more than the Lord gives them, make them proud, and insolent, and tyrannous, more than they which are lords, judges, and magistrates indeed. But for these usurped titles, and base-born honours which they have encroached from men (which puff them up, and trouble them, like Saul's armour, 1 Sam. xvii. 39), they would have intended the duty of ministers and teachers, as the apostles did; whereas now they are so cumbered and mingled, by their usurping over princes, that they are neither good ministers nor good magistrates; but linsey-wolsey, a mingle-mangle between both, nay, utterly fallen from both, being no shepherds, but wolves, of whose slaughters all Christian kingdoms have been the shambles, who, seeking a superfluous title, they have foregone all necessary duties; and but for their formalities, a man could not know of what profession they are; for they never preach, nor write, but to maintain their kingdom, which falls, like the tower of Babel, faster than they build, Gen. xi. Therefore, as Naomi said, 'Call me no more Naomi,' which signifieth beautiful, 'but call me Mara,' which signifieth bitter, Ruth i. 20; so they may say, Call us no more bishops, or pastors, or doctors, or preachers, but call us robbers, and sleepers, and giants, and phari-

sees, whom we succeed. For why should they be called bishops, which do not watch; or pastors, which do not feed; or doctors, which do not teach; or justices, which do not justice, except this be the reason: the idols were called gods, though they were unlike God, Exod. xx. 23. If their bodies had grown as far out of square, since Christ's ascension, as their titles, pomp, and honour, they might stand in the main seas and not be drowned; for their heads would crow above the water.

It followeth, *but ye shall die as a man.* Here he distinguisheth between mortal gods and the immortal God. Ye have seen their glory; now behold their end, 'They shall all die like others.' Though they be never so rich, so goodly, so mighty, so honourable while their date lasteth, yet they may as truly as Job call 'corruption their father, and the worm their mother,' Job xvii. 14; for the grave shall be the last bed of all flesh. As they were born like men, so they shall die like men; the same coming in and going out is to all; nay, if ye respect but the body, he might say, Ye shall die like beasts; for 'man being in honour,' saith David, may well be compared unto 'beasts that perish,' Ps. xlix. Though he be in honour, yet he perisheth like the beasts which have no honour; and death will not take his kingdom for a ransom, when God doth but say his time is come. When Isaiah had said that 'all flesh was grass,' as though he would correct his speech, he adds, 'and the glory of it is as the flower of the field,' Isa. xl. As if he should say, Some men have more glory than other, and they are like flowers; the other are like grass: no great difference, the flower shews fairer, but grass stands longer; one scythe cuts both down, like the fat sheep and the lean, that feed in two pastures, but are killed in one slaughter. So, though the great man live in his palace, and the poor man dwells in his cottage, yet both shall meet at the grave, and vanish together. Even they which are lords, and judges, and counsellors now, are but successors to them which are dead, and are nearer to death now than when I began to preach of this theme. It had been a great sessions for all others to die; but for magistrates, princes, for kings, for emperors to die as they die, what a battle is this that leaves no man alive! Shall the gods die too? He gives them their title, but he tells them their lot. Though their power, though their wealth, though their honour, though their titles, though their train, though their friends, though their ease, though their pleasures, though their diet, though their clothing be not like others', yet their end shall be like others', nay, their ends are like to be more fearful than others'; for God makes him examples of

great men, as he did of Pharaoh; and therefore we see so many strange and sudden deaths of princes more than of others. Therefore he spake here with the least when he said, 'Ye shall die like others;' for very few of them escape the sword, or knife, or poison, which others never or very seldom fear, Exod. ix. 16. But if all your subjects were your friends, yet you shall die like them; for are ye not cold when winter comes? are ye not withered when age comes? are ye not weak when sickness comes? and shall ye not go, as well as the meanest, when death comes? Therefore be not proud of thine honour, as though it would last always, for thou shalt die, and then all thine honour shall forsake thee, and another shall rise in thy place as great as thou; and when his glass is run, another shall follow him, and so another, till death have all.

Be not cruel in thine authority, as though it would last always; for thou shalt die, and then thy authority shall die with thee, and they which remain alive will send infinite curses after thee, because thy life was a scourge unto them.

Be not secure for thy wealth, as though it would last always; for thou shalt die, and then others shall take thy riches, and thou shalt go to give account how thou camest by them. How many things doth he imply when he saith, 'Ye shall die'? This is a bar in their arms, which makes the proudest peacock lay down his feathers when he thinks upon it, though he prick them up again; whereby the Holy Ghost would have them learn that nothing will make them live, and rule, and deal so well in their thrones, as to remember that they shall die, and shortly give account for all, signifying that prosperity makes us forgetful of our ends, and that these mortal gods live as though they were immortal. A hard thing for princes to remember death; they have no leisure to think of it, but chop into the earth before they be aware, like a man which walketh over a field covered with snow, and sees not his way, but when he thinketh to run on, suddenly falls into a pit; even so they which have all things at will, and swim in pleasure, which as a snow covereth their way and dazzleth their sight, while they think to live on and rejoice still, suddenly rush upon death, and make shipwreck in the calm sea.

Therefore, as it is good for them to hear they are gods, so it is meet to know they shall die. Wherefore 'ye shall die,' saith he, in the next words. As if he would prevent some conceit that they would take of the words which he cast out before, he cools them quickly before they swell, and defers not to another time; but where he calls them gods, there he calls them worms' meat, lest they should crow between the praise and the check, 'I have said that ye

are gods, but ye shall die like other men.' But for this *die*, many would live a merry life, and feast, and sport, and let the world slide; but the remembrance of death is like a damp, which puts out all the lights of pleasure, and makes him rub, and frown, and whine which thinks upon it, as if a mote were in his eye. Oh how heavy tidings is this to hear thou shalt die, from him which hath life and death in his own hands, when the message is sent to them which reigned like gods! as if he should say, Even you which glister like angels, whom all the world admire, and sues and bows to, which are called honourable, mighty and gracious lords, I will tell you to what your honour shall come: first, ye shall wax old like others, then ye shall fall sick like others, then ye shall die like others, then ye shall be buried like others, then ye shall be consumed like others, then ye shall be judged like others, even like the beggars which cry at your gates: one sickens, the other sickens; one dies, the other dies; one rots, the other rots: look in the grave, and shew me which was Dives and which was Lazarus. This is some comfort to the poor, that once he shall be like the rich; one day he shall be as wealthy, as mighty, and as glorious as a king; one hour of death will make all alike; they which crowed over others, and looked down upon them like oaks, others shall walk upon them like worms, and they shall be gone as if they had never been.

Where is Alexander, that conquered all the world, and after sought for another, because one would not satisfy him? Where is Xerxes, which could not number his army for multitude? Where is Nimrod, which built his nest in the clouds? Gen. xi. 4. Where is Samson, which slew an army with the jaw of an ass? Judges xv. 15. Where is Constantine, Nero, Caligula, Titus, Vespasian, Domitian, thunderbolts in their times? A hundred princes of England are dead, and but one alive; the rest are gone to give an account how they ruled here, when they sustained the person of God.

Who would have thought, saith Jeremiah, that the enemy should have entered into Jerusalem and spoiled that fair city? Lam. iv. 12. Yet he brake into it, and Jerusalem was ransacked like others. Who would have thought that Herod, which was honoured like a god, should have been devoured with worms, and savoured that none could abide him? Acts xii. 23. Yet while he was in his pomp like an idol, suddenly he was stricken, and all his glory like the snuff of a candle, which all men looked upon, even now when it shined, and now it so savours that they tread it under foot, Job xii. 5.

Who would have thought Jezebel, that beautiful temptation,

should have been gnawed with dogs; yet she was cast unto dogs, and not an ear left to season the grave. What would he think that had seen Solomon in his royalty, and after seen him in the clay? Oh world, unworthy to be beloved, who hath made this proud slaughter? Age, sickness, and death, the three sumners,[1] who have no respect of persons, made them pay the ransom themselves, and bow to the earth from whence they came; there lie the men that were called gods. How soon the flower of this world is faded! Yesterday the tallest cedar in Libanus, to-day like a broken stick trodden under foot; yesterday he stately lived upon earth, to-day shrouded in earth, forsaken, forgotten, that the poorest wretch would not be like unto him, which yesterday crouched and bowed to his knees. Then woe to them which had the name of God, and sins of men, for the mighty shall be mightily tormented. All their friends, and subjects, and servants forsake them, because they go to prison, to try the mercy of hell, and take what the spirits of darkness will heap upon them; there lie many of the men which were called gods, and thus ends the pilgrimage of kings, princes, and rulers. This is our life; while we enjoy it, we lose it; like the sun, which flies swifter than an arrow, and yet no man perceives that it moves. He which lasted nine hundred years, could not hold out one hour longer; and what hath he now more than a child which lived but a year? Where are they which founded this goodly city, which possessed these fair houses, and walked these pleasant fields, which erected these stately temples, which kneeled in these seats, which preached out of this place but thirty years ago? Is not earth turned to earth? and shall not our sun set like theirs when the night comes? Yet we cannot believe that death will find out us, as he hath found out them; though all men die, yet every man dreams, I shall escape; or at the least, I shall live till I be old. This is strange, men cannot think that God will do again that which he doth daily, or that he will deal with them as he deals with others. Tell one of us that all others shall die, we believe it; tell one of us we shall die, and we believe it sooner of all than of one; though we be sore, though we be weak, though we be sick, though we be elder than those whom we follow to the ground. So they thought which lie in this mould under your feet, as you do. If wisdom, or riches, or favour, could have entreated death, those which have lived before us would have kept our possessions from us; but death would take no bail, we are all tenants at will, and we must leave this cottage whensoever the landlord will put

[1] That is, 'summoner,' or sergeant.—Ed.

another in our room, at a year's, at a month's, at a week's, at a day's, at an hour's warning, or less. The clothes which we wear upon our backs, the graves which are under our feet, the sun which sets over our heads, and the meats which go into our mouths, do cry unto us that we shall wear, and set, and die like the beasts, and fowls, and fishes, which now are dead in our dishes, and but even now were living in the elements. Our fathers have summoned us, and we must summon our children, to the grave. Every thing every day suffers some eclipse, nothing standing at a stay; but one creature calls to another, Let us leave this world. While we play our pageants upon this stage of short continuance, every man hath a part, some longer, and some shorter; and while the actors are at it, suddenly death steps upon the stage, like a hawk which separates one of the doves from the flight; he shoots his dart; where it lights, there falls one of the actors dead before them, and makes all the rest aghast; they muse, and mourn, and bury him, and then to the sport again! While they sing, play, and dance, death comes again and strikes another; there he lies, they mourn for him, and bury him as they did the former, and play again. So one after another till the players be vanished, like the accusers which came before Christ, John viii. 9; and death is the last upon the stage, so 'the figure of this world passeth away.' Many which stand here, may lie here or elsewhere within this twelvemonth. But thou thinkest it is not I, and he thinketh it is not he; but he which thinks so cometh soonest to it. If I could make you believe that you have but a year to live, and that all which hear me this day shall come to the bar before this day twelvemonth return again, ye would prepare yourselves to die, and leave your sins behind you, and depart Christians out of the church, with a mind to do all that God would have you; that when the twelvemonth is ended, ye might live with the angels in heaven, and escape that fiery lake where the glutton begs but a drop of water to cool the tip of his tongue, and it will not be granted him, lest it should ease him. But now we know not whether we shall live a week to an end, we will do nothing that he bids us, but abide the venture, and try the market, what God will give for sin; so one is taken after another, and because we are not ready, we go against our will, like Lot's wife out of Sodom. This is our fashion, to set the best last, till we can neither forsake our sin, nor hope of mercy. Thus I have proclaimed to all kings, princes, judges, councillors, and magistrates, that which Isaiah foretold to one, 'Set thy things in order, for thou shalt die;' yet fifteen

years were behind when the prophet warned him to set all things in order. But I cannot promise you fifteen years ; for many princes do not reign so long, for one that doth. That which Isaiah spake to one, God here pronounceth to all, 'Ye shall die;' therefore the message is sent to you, and when ye think of your honour, think of your end. These two notes, that *ye are gods*, and that *ye shall die*, the Holy Ghost thought enough to teach you how to live and how to rule. And that we may be all like gods hereafter, let us prepare before the account ; for none are in heaven but they that left the world before it left them.

Therefore let us pray that God would keep us in remembrance of his judgments, that the subtilty of sin never steal our hearts from him, but that we may count this life a respite to repent, before the judge sit to divide between the sheep and the goats ; when we shall give account of all his instructions, corrections, and benefits, even of this seed which hath been sown since ye came in, how you have received his word this hour.

# THE TRIAL OF VANITY.

# THE TRIAL OF VANITY.

*Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.*—ECCLES. I. 2.

THIS book begins with *All is vanity*, and ends with *Fear God, and keep his commandments.* If that sentence were knit to this, which Solomon keepeth to the end, as the haven of rest, after the turmoils of vanity; it is like that which Christ said to Martha, 'Thou art troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary,' Luke x. 40. That which troubleth us, Solomon calls *vanity;* that which is necessary, he calls the *fear of God.* From that to this, should be every man's pilgrimage in this world; we begin at vanity, and never know perfectly that we are vain, until we repent with Solomon. Therefore this is his first greeting and lesson to all after his conversion, to warn them that all is vanity; as if God had said to him, as he said to Ezekiel, 'Cause Jerusalem to know her abomination,' Ezek. xvi. 2; as though men did not know their sins how vain they are, as Eliphaz saith, 'He believeth not that he is vain,' Job xv. 31; which makes every man defer his repentance until the very hour cometh that sin maketh preparation to leave him; and then fainting, he is unwilling to depart, because he is not ready. Therefore I have chosen this sentence, which speaks of nothing but vanity, to shew how we take the way to misery, for the way to happiness, and turn the 'day of salvation' to the 'day of vanity.' Let every man think as I go in this matter, why he should love that which Solomon repented, if he think Solomon happier after he repented than he was before. This verse is the sum or contents of all this book, and therefore Solomon begins with it, and ends with it; as if he should say, first, This is the matter which I will prove; and after, This is the matter which I have proved; now you see whether I told you true, that all is vanity. I may call it Solomon's theme, or the

fardel of vanities, which, when he hath bound in a bundle, he bids us cast it into the fire; for after he hath done with them, in his last chapter and thirteenth verse, as though he would have no more thought of them, he turns away from them, as if he had buried them, and goes to another matter, saying, 'Now let us hear the end of all; Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.' As though he were exceeding glad, that after so many dangers through the route of vanity, yet God let him see the haven of rest, and brought him to the right end, and set him upon shore, where he might see his vanities, as Moses looked back upon his enemies, and saw them drowned behind him, Exod. xiv. 30.

The whole narration doth shew, that Solomon wrote this book after his fall. When he had the experience of vanities, and seen the folly of the world, what evil comes of pleasure, and what fruit groweth of sin, he was bold to say, 'Vanity of vanities,' &c.; which he avoucheth with such a protestation, as though he would justify it against many adversaries; for all the world is in love with that which he calls vanity. Therefore he puts to his name in the midst of his sentence, as if he would defend it against all comers; if any man ask, Who broached this strange doctrine? The Preacher, saith Solomon. To testify his hearty conversion unto God, he calls himself a *preacher*, in the witness of his unfeigned repentance; as if God had said unto him, 'Thou being converted, convert thy brethren,' and be a preacher, as thou art a king. So when we are converted, we should become preachers unto others, and shew some fruits of our calling, as Solomon left this book for a monument to all ages of his conversion. Therefore they which write that Solomon died in his sin, and that such a famous instrument of God went to the damned, do great wrong to the worthy king, which gives them such an example to repent, and would correct their rash judgment, if they considered, first, that he was the clearest figure of Christ (except Melchisedec), which passed all kings in prosperity, and all men in wisdom; secondly, that he was inspired by the Holy Ghost, like the prophets, to be one of the pens of God to write his holy word, Ps. xlv. 1, the word of salvation, which was not fit for a reprobate; thirdly, that God promised to his father, that he would not take his Spirit and his mercy from him as he did from Saul, nor forsake him as he did Saul, but correct him in another sort, 1 Chron. xvii. 13, 2 Sam. vii. 13; fourthly, that God is said to love him, 2 Sam. xii., Neh. xiii. 26; therefore, as Paul concludes that Jacob was elected, because God saith, 'Jacob have

I loved,' Rom. ix., Gen. xxvii., so we may conclude that Solomon was elected, because God saith, 'Solomon have I loved;' fifthly, that in Luke xiii. 28, all the prophets of God are said to be in heaven; and therefore Solomon, being an holy prophet, must be holden to be in heaven. To shew that he was a holy prophet, in 2 Peter iii. 2, Peter calleth all the prophets which wrote in the Scripture, 'holy prophets.' Lastly, We may gather out of Eccles. vii. 15, and Prov. v. 14, that Solomon had left his concubines and vanities before he wrote this book, 1 Kings xi. 43, 2 Chron. ix. 31. Therefore, to say that the figure of Christ, the penman of the holy Scripture, the man whom God loved, the wisest man that ever was, and one of the holy prophets, died a reprobate, is presumption against the word, impiety against God, and wrong to the dead; although, because of his grievous fall into idolatry and uncleanness, God left him in disgrace, and makes no mention of his repentance, where he speaks of his death, 1 Kings xi. 43, that they 'which stand may take heed lest they fall,' 1 Cor. x. 12, and see how easy it is to slip, by the example of him who was wiser than they. Solomon, being wicked, and yet saved, was a figure of the church, whose sins are forgiven.

Thus having found as it were the mine, now let us dig for the treasure, *vanity of vanities*, &c. This is Solomon's conclusion: when he had gone through the whole world, and tried all things, like a spy sent into a strange country, as if he were now come home from his pilgrimage, they gather about him to inquire what he hath heard and seen abroad, and what he thinks of the world, and these things which are so loved among men, like a man in admiration of that which he had seen, and not able to express particularly one after another, he contracts his news into a word. You ask me what I have seen, and what I have heard, 'Vanity,' saith Solomon. And what else? 'Vanity of vanities.' And what else? 'All is vanity.' This is the history of my voyage: I have seen nothing but vanity over the world. Carry this for the news from the Preacher, 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity;' as if he should say, vanity and greater vanity, and more than vanity. So the further he did go, the more vanity he did see, and the nearer he looked the greater it seemed, till at last he could see nothing but vanity. When he was come to this, that he did see all things vain, upon which men set their hearts, he was moved to compassion, and could be silent no longer, but needs he must write to them which seek felicity, as he did, in transitory things, to warn them that they seek it not any longer in these foolish things, which have no stability nor contentation, but fly from them to the fear of God, which hath the promises

of this life and the life to come, 1 Tim. iv. 8. Therefore he begins with *all is vanity*, as if he should say, 'Love not the world, nor the things of the world,' 1 John ii. 15, for I have tried that there is no certainty in them. Thus he withdraweth them, first, from the wrong way, and then sets them in the right way to happiness, which he defineth, at last, to 'Fear God and keep his commandments,' Eccles. xii. 13. When he had gone through a thousand vanities, then that comes in at the end, even like our repentance, which stays till death. So his drift is to shew that man's happiness is not in these things which we count of, but in those which we defer. His reason is, they are all vanity; his proof is because there is no stability in them, nor contentation of mind; his conclusion is therefore, Contemn the world, and look up to heaven from whence ye came, and whither ye shall go.

This is the scope which Solomon aims at, as though we did all seek happiness, but we go a wrong way unto it; therefore he sounds a retreat, shewing that if we hold on our course, and go forwards as we have begun, we shall not find happiness, but great misery, because we go by vanity. Therefore, to fright us out of this way, he breaks forth into an exclamation, 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.'

Now Solomon, full of wisdom, and schooled with experience, is licensed to give his sentence of the whole world. For 'the spiritual man judgeth all things,' 1 Cor. ii. 15, his judgment is so certain that it runs before the evidence, and condemns all for vanity, before he convince them to be vain. Whereas we prove first and condemn after, because our words are no authorities; he concludes first, and proves after; never any judge did condemn so many together. Solomon resolved all the questions of the queen of Sheba, 2 Chron. ix. 2; yet Solomon never answered so many questions at once as now. For what can you inquire, but here you have an answer? Ask him, as the soldiers, and harlots, and publicans asked John, Luke iii. 14. What is sin? Vanity, saith Solomon. What is pleasure? Vanity too. What is beauty? Vanity too. What is riches? Vanity too. What is honour? Vanity too. What is long life? Vanity too. This is the state of all things after the fall, all turn to vanity. This is no reproach to the things, but shame to him which so abused them, that all things should be called vanity for him. What a testimony is this of him which should be the only servant of God on earth, whom he created in holiness and righteousness, whom he framed to his own image, whom he placed in paradise, and would have raised to heaven, to hear that he hath

so polluted his life with every sin, that now there is nothing but vanity. That is a lamentable song, which will make him weep that tunes it, if he think what he saith, how his state is changed since Adam his father died. Once God said, 'That all was good,' Gen. i.; and now he saith that all is naught and vain, as though he forbade man that which he created for man. That is not Solomon's meaning, to debar men from the use of creatures. Although all things changed with man, and became worse than they were, Rom. viii. 20, yet he doth here rather shew, that man reaps nothing but vanity out of these things by reason of his corruption, than that the things themselves are vain, if they were well used. For ever since the creation, Paul saith, 1 Tim. iv. 4, that 'every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it be received or used with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.' That is it which maketh them profitable to us, which because it is wanting for the most part, therefore Solomon saith, that all are vain to us; not vain of themselves, but because they are not sanctified as they should be, therefore in Eccles. ii. 24, iii. 12, 22, v. 18, viii. 15, he shews a way how we may make profit of all, and rejoice in our labours, and find a lawful pleasure in earthly things. So often he calls to the use, lest we should err as the monks and hermits have done before. Mistaking these words, when he saith, that 'All is vanity,' they have forsaken all company, and government, and office, and trade, and got themselves into the wilderness among beasts, to live in quiet and silence, saying, that men could not live in the world and please God, because 'All is vanity.' So while they counted all things vain, they became vain themselves, and left those blessings which Solomon enjoyed after his knowledge more than he did before. Therefore it is vain man which Solomon reproveth; which is not only called 'vanity,' but 'lighter than vanity,' Ps. lxii. 9. If he did not things vainly, nothing should be vain in the world; whereas now, by abuse, we may see sometimes as great vanity in the best things as in the worst. For are not many vain in their knowledge, vain in their policies, vain in their learning, as other are vain in their ignorance? Was not the wisdom of Ahithophel a vain thing? the swiftness of Asahel a vain thing? the strength of Goliath a vain thing? the treasures of Nebuchadnezzar a vain thing? the honour of Haman a vain thing? the beauty of Absalom a vain thing? the knowledge of the scribes a vain thing? the devotion of the pharisees a vain thing? And so is the learning of all those a vain thing that do no good with it, but either it lies under a bushel and moulds, or else it prattles like

Tertullus, always against Paul, Acts xxiv. 5, striving to make war between them which love dearer than any brethren.

By this you may see that vanity is bold, when she breaks into houses and churches and palaces, and sometimes vanity may come to infect, where truth may not come to reprove. Is it not high time then to sound this alarm again, 'Vanity of vanities,' &c.

If we would hear how vehemently and how pitifully Solomon pronounceth this outcry, haply it would move us a little to hear how he did exclaim of his own life, and condemned himself, as it were by the sound of a trumpet, that all might hear. For we are all by nature such deaf adders, that whether the prophets come piping, or mourning, or crying, they go away from us again mourning like Jeremiah, 'We would have cured Babel, but she would not be cured,' Jer. li. 9. Nay, the city of Jerusalem would not, saith our Saviour Christ, when he wept for his Israelites. Therefore Solomon speaks thrice, like a crier, 'Vanity of vanities.' As the mother which would fain make her son to hear, she doubles and trebles her words, 'What, my son! and what, the son of my womb! and what, the son of my desire!' Prov. xxi. 1. So when God would stir us up to hear, he crieth thrice to the earth, and saith, 'Earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord,' Jer. xxii. 29. So when Solomon would dissuade from the company of the wicked (read Prov. iv. 14) how often he repeats the charge, 'Enter not into the way of the wicked, walk not in it, avoid it, go not by it, turn from it, and pass by,' as though he would never have done, or as though we would never hear. So Christ, when he taught Peter what was his duty, rehearsed it thrice, 'Feed, feed, feed,' John xxi. 16. Joseph sheweth the reason of these repetitions, when he tells Pharaoh why his dream was doubled, because the matter was important and certain, Gen. xli. 32. Therefore when Solomon repeats this saying so often, he calls for audience, as though he had some weighty and great matter to utter. Such a point of wisdom it is for every man to know that all is vanity, if we direct not things to their right end. As when the Holy Ghost would signify that God is all holy, he repeated thrice, 'Holy, holy, holy,' Isa. vi. So when he would shew how man is all vain, thrice he repeateth vanity, to shew how hardly man believes that he is vain, Job xv. 31; therefore he brings in three assertions, as it were three witnesses to prove it. All agree upon the same words, but that the last is more plain, and saith, that 'All is vanity;' that is, that man is not only changed and become vain; but for the vanity of man, as the apostle saith, 'The creatures are subject to vanity, and have not the

glory and liberty which they should have, for the sin of man,' Rom. viii. 20.

A spiritual eye doth see some vanity or other in everything, as appeareth betwixt Christ and his disciples at Jerusalem, Luke xxi. 5, Mat. xxiv. 1. They gazed upon the building of the temple as a brave thing, and would have Christ to behold it with them; but he did see that it was but vanity, and therefore said, 'Are these the things that ye look upon?' As if he should say, How vain are you to gaze upon this! If Christ thought the beauty of his temple a vain thing, and not worth the sight, which yet was beautified and built by his own prescription, how should Solomon express all the vanity of the world, to which all men have added more and more since the beginning! Therefore, as if he wanted words to express it, as he did see it, he breaks forth into an exclamation, and repeats the same often, 'Vanity of vanities,' as if he should say, I cannot speak how vain the world is, but vain it is, and very vain, and nought but vain; speaking as if he had the feeling and sense of it, as though the world stood naked before him; and it grieved him to see, he cuts his words in chiding manner, and makes short riddance, as if it irked him to speak all that he knew; therefore that which he speaks, he speaks roundly, that if they read no more, but sleep all the sermon after, yet the first sentence shall strike a sting into their hearts, and leave a sound behind to waken them when they are gone; as many (you know) remember this sentence, which remember no sentence in all this book beside. Who hath not heard *vanity of vanities*, &c., though few have conceived it? This is the phrase of Scripture. When the Holy Ghost would commend the Song of Solomon above all other songs, he calls it *the Song of songs*, so called in the Hebrew, and mentioned in the first book of Kings, the fourth chapter, and the 32d verse. When he would exalt the heavenly King above all, he calls him *the King of kings;* so when he would note a great vanity, and yet a greater, and a greater than that, which is the greatest of all, he calls it *vanity of vanities*, as when we would note a great fool, we will say, *a fool of fools, a sin of sins, a servant of servants.* These are scornful names to the world, and homely titles to give our pleasures, to call them *vanity of vanities*, and again *vanity of vanities*, and yet again *vanity;* as though we would provoke them to fall out with us, like a man which sharpens his enemy with taunts, when he would egg him to fight. He might have mollified his terms, before he condemned the world thrice; but the world is no changeling, that Solomon should change his judgment; but vain it was,

vain it is, and vain it will be; and therefore a thrice vain world he may call it; first, *vanity*, straight *vanity of vanities*, and suddenly *all is vanity*. What a transcendent is this! As though it increased while he spake; so fast groweth this weed to worse and worse, like the image which appeared to Nebuchadnezzar: the first part was of gold, the second of silver, the third of brass, the fourth of iron, the fifth of clay; so by many changes the world grows worse and worse, and all they which follow it. When a man begins to like of pleasure, and opens the door to one vanity which he loves, straight as many vanities flock to him as Solomon had concubines, 1 Kings xi. 3, till the temple of God be like a den of thieves. Therefore when Solomon beheld such a plurality, and *tot quot* of vanities, like surges, coming one upon another in plaits and folds, he spake as though he would shew us vanity hatching vanities: 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.' The first saying doth pass without let; but the last rubs and sinks not into the hearts of men so easily as it is spoken. Methinks I hear some men dispute for Baal, and bid Solomon stay before he comes to *all is vanity*. It may be that sin is vanity, and pleasure is vanity; but shall we condemn all for sin and pleasure? What say you to beauty, which is nature's dowry, and cheereth the eye, as sweet meat doth the taste? Beauty is like a fair picture; take away the colour, and there is nothing left. Beauty indeed is both a colour and a temptation, the colour fadeth and the temptation snareth. But what say you to riches, which make men lords over the rest, and allow them to go brave, and lie soft, and fare daintly, and have what they list? Riches are like painted grapes, which look as though they would satisfy a man, but do not slake his hunger, nor quench his thirst. Riches indeed do make a man covet more, and get envy, and keep the mind in care. But what say you to honour, which sets a man aloft, and makes the knee bow, and the tongue sooth, and the head stand bare, as though they were other kind of creatures above them? Honour is like a king in a play: when his part is done, his ornaments are taken from him, and he which held the bason to him is as good as he. Honour indeed may command all but life; he makes a fair show now, but when death comes, all is one. But what say you to profound knowledge in deep mysteries, which makes men sought unto, and called deep clerks, and great doctors? Knowledge is like the letter which Uriah carried against himself, 2 Sam. xi.; so knowledge draws on a greater judgment, and oftentimes condemns the bearer. Knowledge without virtue leaves a man without excuse, and is a witness against him, because he under-

stands what is good, and will not do it. Yet there is another darling of account behind. What say you to long life, which causeth a man to see his children's children, and makes him reverend before the people? Long life is like a long night, when a man cannot sleep; so age is wearisome with sickness, and strives with itself, because it cannot walk, nor talk, nor hear, nor see, nor taste, nor sleep, as it was wont; therefore wisheth often the night were gone, and the pain were past. Indeed, he that sees many days, sees many miseries; and therefore what is not vain in life, sith life itself is vain? Shew me the light which will not darken, shew me the flower which will not fade, shew me the fruit which will not corrupt, shew me the garment which will not wear, shew me the beauty which will not wither, shew me the strength which will not weaken, shew me the time which will not pass, and I will recall that all is vanity; but if all things vanish, then all things are vain; yet this will not go for truth before men have smarted for the trial. Some are so vain that they count nothing vanity, but that which is vainer than the rest delights them most; for there is as it were a commonweal of vain persons, and he which can be vainest is like a king of the rest. Some are of this mind, that they think all is vanity but that which they love; and therefore they call them vain and curious, and fantastical, which speak against their vanities, and say that it is necessary to be vain, Prov. xii. 12, xiv. 9, xxviii. 4; for they cannot live unless they deceive, they cannot please unless they flatter, they cannot be believed unless they swear, they cannot be esteemed unless they roist, as Demetrius thought that he should beg unless he might sell images, Acts xix. 24. There is another sort like the buyer in Prov. xx., which saith, 'It is naught, it is naught, but when he is gone apart, he boasteth.' So they will say of the world, It is naught, it is naught, before men, and swear that all is vanity; but when they are gone apart, they reconcile themselves unto it, and kiss it, and promise to be vain still, but they cannot abide to be counted vain, the vainest man that is. This shews that the folly of the world is so open and shameful, that her lovers must needs condemn her. You shall hear them say oftentimes, It is a vain world, a wicked world, a naughty world, yet they will not forsake it, to die; like dastard soldiers, who rail against the enemy, but dare not fight against him. 'All is vanity;' but this is 'vanity of vanities,' that men will follow that which they condemn. But this is, that every sinner might condemn himself; for the conscience must judge first, and then God; as our Saviour saith, 'Out of thine own mouth,' and so, out of thine own heart, 'I will condemn

thee, naughty servant,' Luke xix. 22, shewing that the wicked condemn themselves, before they are condemned of God. These are the world's fools, which care not what be their end, so that their way be pleasant.

Oh that here were a full end or conclusion of vanities; but behold a greater vanity is behind; for our religion is vanity, like the Scribes and Pharisees, as Matthew saith in the 23d chapter, and 27th verse, having a bare show of holiness, as he saith he could call it but a show of holiness, and scarce that. Our vanity is vanity, but our holiness is but a show of holiness, not worthy to be called *holiness*, but *like holiness;* yet the most part have not so much as the show of holiness, as the Pharisees had, but are vain in show, inside and outside too. Thus we find nothing yet but vanity. I cannot lead you from one unto another, to shew you the several vanities of every person, or every thing, because Solomon saith, 'All is vanity.' How many sins, then, have we to condemn us, whose vanities are sprinkled in every thing? Which have not only so many vanities as there be things, but many vanities in every thing? As in our fare, how many vanities be there, which makes us rise sometimes sick, sometime sleepy, sometime drunken. Yet are there more vanities in our sports, our laughing, and swearing, and jesting, and scoffing, and dallying, and playing with the Scriptures; which oftentimes leaves such a sting behind, that we had rather have lost our sport, than feel the worm that gnaws us for it. And yet there are more vanities in our apparel, ruff upon ruff, lace upon lace, cut upon cut, four and twenty orders, to the third and fourth degree, as though our apparel were apparelled, until the woman be not worth so much as her attire; that if we would see vanity herself, how she would go if she did wear apparel, she would even go like our women; for she could not go, nor speak, nor look vainer. Who doth not know that these are vanities, and that they might leave them if they would? But that ye might see there is a heart within, vainer than the apparel is without, therefore when these vanities are worn out, they will have new, and still new, till all be spent upon vanity; and then they begin, like the prodigal child, to see how vain they were, when they have bought wisdom with sorrow, Luke xv. 7. What would Solomon say, if he should see how vanity is grown since his time, what a height she is mounted, what a train follows her, that there is no prince in the world hath so many attendants as vanity! She was but an imp then, but now she is a mother, and who can number her sons and daughters? The child is vain in playing, the mother vain in dandling, the father vain in giving, the courtier

vain in spending, the soldier vain in boasting, the suitor vain in striving, the traveller vain in talking, the merchant vain in swearing, the gentleman vain in building, the husbandman vain in carking, the old man vain in coveting, the servant-man vain in soothing, the young man vain in sporting, the papist vain in superstition, the protestant vain in conversation. Every vanity is so pleasant to one or other, that they cannot miss one. So she gads by sea, and by land, and still more disciples flock unto her, of gamesters, and swearers, and players, and tipplers, and hacksters, and courtiers, as thick as the flies of Egypt, which buzzed in their ears, and their eyes, and their necks, before and behind, that a man cannot set his foot but upon vanity. As the waters covered the earth when but eight persons were saved, Gen. viii. 30, so vanity hath covered it again, a worse deluge than the first, because it hath not suffered eight persons to escape, but every man is tainted with some vanity or other; which God seeing in that place and city which should be best in the world, that all men in the city were vain, calls it 'The city of vanity,' Isa. xxiv. 10. So we may say, 'the world of vanity,' because she hath an interest in every person of it, she sits upon the earth like a serpent, and hatcheth all the sins which you see amongst men. As full as heaven is of bliss, so the world is fraught with vanity, court, city, and country. Whither doth not vanity go, but to heaven? Seeing then that vanity is so extolled amongst men, Solomon gives this sentence, that 'all is vanity.' Christ like a mediator concludes upon it, that 'there is but one thing necessary,' Luke x. 42; therefore let our sentence be like theirs; for sure, if we had Solomon's repentance, we should see such an image of vanity before us, as would make us cry again and again, as often as Solomon, 'Vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities, and all is vanity.' What a sweet sentence is this from a king, who may live as he list by authority, to say that all is vanity! Oh that we may hear kings speak so again! for it is a speech which had need of some to countenance it; for none are counted vain now, but they that speak against vanity. Then Solomon cried it, but now we must whisper it. You may see how times are changed. Once this was sound divinity, now it is flat railing; to say that all is vanity, is even the upshot of a disturber. If ye ask the atheist, or epicure, or those roguish players, what is a disturber? you shall see that they will make Solomon one, because he speaketh against vanity, for this is their definition. He which will not allow men to profane the Sabbath, but saith, that cards, and dice, and stage-players, and May-games, and May-poles, and May-fools, and morris dancers

are vanity, is a prattler, disturber, and an arch-puritan, by the law, which the Jews had to kill Christ, John xix. 7. The reason is, because men cannot abide to be controlled of their pleasures, Prov. xiii. 1. Therefore they hold it as an offence to speak against their sports, or their customs, or their follies, or their pleasures, or their titles, or their toys; and they which would not be counted precise in these times, must take heed that they go not so far as Solomon, to term all vanity. But they must say, that the vanities of great men are necessary recreations, and the vanities of the people are means to make unity! Greater books are written to maintain this, than Solomon made to refute it; so they have made their wit and their learning vanity, and are vain in print. But they that would know now of what standing such precise reprovers are, and how ancient this reproof is, may see here, that if this be a crime to call vanity, *vanity*, the wisest man that ever was before Christ, was herein criminal, not when he strayed, but when he repented. In his best mind, when he came like a preacher, he preached this first, 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity,' yet many had rather try it with Solomon, than believe it of Solomon; and while they are wandering with him, some are taken out of their way, and cut short of the time which they set to repent; from others God taketh away his grace, so they never return, because their guide is gone. This the Holy Ghost pointed at when he saith, 'They followed vanity, and became vain,' 2 Kings xvii. 15, shewing that the things we follow will make us like themselves, and lead us whither they belong, to heaven or hell. In Rom. viii. 20, vanity is put for *destruction*, but it is never put for *salvation*. If other creatures are subject to a kind of destruction for the sin of man, as Paul sheweth, what destruction shall light upon man for his own sin? Therefore let our sentence run with Solomon, 'Vanity of vanities, all is vain.' We could afford the world better words, and fairer titles than Vanity of vanities, but call it what we will, Solomon shews what it is, and what we will say in the end when we have tried it, then Vanity of vanities; yet it is comfort of comforts, glory of glories, and life of lives. But as Laban shewed himself at parting, Gen xxxi., so at parting you shall see how it will serve you. They seem pleasant vanities, and honest vanities, and profitable vanities, but David calls them 'deceitful vanities,' Ps. xxxi. 6. Jonah comes after and calls them 'lying vanities,' Jonah ii. 8, that is, which promise pleasure, and profit, and all, but deceive all. When they should perform, they play Laban, which gave Leah for Rachel. If they be lying vanities, and deceitful vanities, then are

they woful and miserable vanities. Therefore if we be not come to Solomon's conclusion, to think all is vanity, it is because our own vanity will not suffer us to see the vanity of other things. When we have proved, like Solomon, as fast as every man groweth in knowledge and experience, so he begins to cry *vanity*, and after, *vanity of vanities*, and at last, *all is vanity*; so we contemn not all at once, but one sin after another, one pleasure after another, till at last we count *all is vanity*, and then we are come home with Solomon, and may be preachers unto others.

Thus I have shewed you, as it were, a limb of vanity, you may look about you and see the whole body; for if she be anywhere in this land, this is her pontifical seat, where she is never non-resident. Now I will leave you to examine these sayings, whether all things have not been in vain unto you yet. If they have been vain to you, and yet are good in their own nature, then think how vain you are, who have turned so many good things to vanity. Yet to set you in the way before I end, I will answer them which ask, if all things be vain, as Solomon saith, tell us what we should choose, that we be not vain. Christ saith, that 'one thing is necessary,' Luke x. Is Solomon contrary to Christ? No; therefore one thing Solomon excepts too, to 'fear God and keep his commandments;' therefore if all be vain but this, let the tempter take thee up again, and shew thee the kingdoms of the world: when he saith, 'All these will I give thee,' Mat. iv., thou mayest say, All these I contemn, for all is vain.

What then? 'Turn away mine eyes,' saith the prophet David, and my ears, and my heart too, 'from vanity,' Ps. cxix. Try and prove thou no longer, for Solomon hath proved for thee; it is better to believe him, than try with him; therefore now it remaineth, that as they brought forth their vain books after Paul's preaching, and cast them into the fire, Acts xix. 19, so ye should cast out all your vanities this day, and sacrifice them to God, for they have been your idols; therefore bury them, as Jacob did the idols, that never man saw them after, Gen. xxxv. 4. And as God gave Job other children, so he will give you other pleasures; fear not that your joys will go away with your vanities, as many think they shall never be merry again, if they would be converted to religion. But as David danced before the ark, as merrily as Herodias danced before the king, 2 Sam. vi. 14, so know undoubtedly that the righteous find more joy in goodness, than ever the wicked found in filthiness. Nay, saith David, 'more than they can find in riches or honours,

when their wheat and wine abound,' Ps. iv. 7. As a 'horse is a vain thing to save a man,' Ps. xxxiii. 17, so all these things are too vain to make a man happy. I appeal to yourselves, if ye have tried the pleasures of vanity already, as I know ye have, whether ye may readily say with St Paul, 'What profit have we of these things whereof we are ashamed?' No profit, but shame, and grief, and guilt, and a dreadful expectation of judgment. As Solomon calls folly the 'inheritance of folly,' Prov. xiv. 18; so vanity is the inheritance of vanity. Ten times Laban changed Jacob's wages, but ten thousand times sin hath changed your wages, and deceived you with other success than you looked for; like Shebna, which built his sepulchre in one country, and was buried in the other, Isa. xxii. And yet how many changes are behind you know not, for if you did, you would make inquisition now, and banish them at first; for whensoever ye go about to cast them out, they will say still like the devils, that thou 'tormentest them before the time,' Mat. viii. 29. It seems that many are touched with compassion of this, and therefore reprieve their vanities, and slack the execution, as though they were afraid to offend the devil; even we perhaps are in the trace of vanity, hunting with Solomon to find that which we love, and find it not, because we seek out of the way. What is the remedy? 'So run,' saith Paul, 'that ye may obtain,' 1 Cor. ix. 24; you have tried the evil way to happiness, now try the good way, and then that which ye love now shall not only seem vain, but vanity of vanities, that ye will marvel how ye could love them so long, and would not be in the dotage of them again for all the world. Until these earthly things seem vain, no heavenly thing shall seem precious; therefore lose no more time; the day comes when *vanity of vanities* shall be turned to *misery of miseries*, and *all is vanity* to *all is misery*.

There is a certain place called hell, where God keeps general sessions; there justice shall sit to examine vanity, *who* hath embraced her, and *who* hath forsaken God; and he which made his pleasure of sin, so soon as he hears this doom, 'Depart from me, ye wicked,' shall go down by a black way with many a sigh and sob from God, from the angels, from the saints, from joy, from glory, from bliss, with the fiends of hell, to sup in the place of darkness with the princes of horror, the table of vengeance, in the chair of calamity, with the crown of death upon his head; and he which tempted him to sin, shall plague him for sinning, until he cry like Cain, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear;' for all the griefs, and fears, and cares, and troubles, which fed upon him while he

lived, shall meet in an hour, and exceed them so far that he suffers for all, and marvels how any torment can be left for others. What faith or fear have they that go dancing or leaping to this fire, as it were to a banquet, like a fool which runneth to the stocks? How happy were it for men, as we live in these days, if there were no judgment at all! What will we answer, when he which made Solomon to write this, shall ask why we would not believe it? What shall we say, when he which came from his kingdom to bring us unto it, demands why we did turn the day of salvation into the day of vanity? If ye cannot excuse it here, how will ye defend it there? We were born in vanity, and we live in vanity, but we would not die in vanity, because no man looks for any good of his sins after he is past this world; therefore let us remember, that whither the vain men are gone, thither vain men shall go. There be not two ends for sinners, but one; what a woful bargain will it seem then to remember that thou didst sell thy soul for vanity! If anything will reclaim us, this will be a terror in our hearts, to think that we shall give account unto him, which will measure to us as much misery as we have taken vanity; therefore, as Abner said to Joab, 'Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end?' 2 Sam. ii. 26, so let every man consider with himself, though his vanities be sweet now, yet they will be bitter in the end. As Amnon, after he had fulfilled his lust, did hate Tamar, which defiled her, more than he loved her before, 2 Sam. xiii. 15, so when the sport is past, and death looks us in the face, we shall hate our vanities more than we love them now. All this doth conclude that our Saviour said to Martha, 'But one thing is necessary,' Luke x. 41, which God grant we may choose, for his Son Jesus Christ and then we have learned this lesson!

# THE LADDER OF PEACE.

# THE LADDER OF PEACE.

*Rejoice evermore. Pray continually. In all things give thanks.*
—1 THES. V. 16–18.

WHEN I spake last of these words, I shewed you how the apostle commendeth unto us three virtues, of greater price than the three presents which the wise men brought unto Christ: the first is, 'Rejoice evermore;' the second is, 'Pray continually;' the third, 'In all things give thanks.' All three are of one last, for we must rejoice continually, because he saith, Rejoice evermore; and we must pray continually, because he saith, Pray continually; and we must give thanks continually, because he saith, In all things give thanks. These are the three things which, one saith, all men do, and no man doth, because every man doth them, and scarce one doth them as he should; therefore the apostle, to shew us how we should do them well, doth put *continually* unto them, as though continuance were the perfection of all virtues. I chose this scripture for a consolation to them which are afflicted in conscience, which is commonly the disease of the innocentest soul, for they think that they do well to *mourn continually;* and Paul saith, *Rejoice continually;* and therefore I will speak a little more of these words than I did before. If you mark it, it may well be called *The Ladder of Peace,* for it stands upon three steps, and every step is a step from trouble to peace, from sorrow to joy; for he which can rejoice, is past grief; and he which can pray, is passing from his grief; and he which can give thanks, hath obtained his desire. A man cannot rejoice and mourn; a man cannot pray and despair; a man cannot give thanks and be offended; therefore keep still upon one of these three steps, and you shall never sorrow too much. If thou canst not rejoice, as if thy pain were past, then

give thanks, because thy pain is profitable. If thou canst not think that thy pain is worth thanks, then pray that thou mayest have patience to bear it; and it is impossible in praying, or thanking, or rejoicing, that any grief should want patience enough to bear it. But when you forget to rejoice in the Lord, then you begin to muse, and after to fear, and after to distrust, and at last to despair, and then every thought seems to be a sin against the Holy Ghost. How many sins doth the afflicted conscience record against itself, repenting for breaking this commandment and that commandment, and never repenteth for breaking this commandment, 'Rejoice evermore'!

It is not an indifferent thing to rejoice, or not to rejoice; but we are commanded to rejoice, to shew that we break a commandment if we rejoice not. Oh what a comfort is this, when the Comforter himself shall command us to rejoice! God was wont to say, *Repent*, and not *rejoice*, because men rejoice too much; but here God commandeth to rejoice, as though some men did not rejoice enough; therefore you must understand to whom he speaketh. In Ps. cxlix. 5, it is said, 'Let the saints be glad;' not, let the wicked be glad. And in Isa. xl. 1, he saith, 'Comfort my people,' not comfort mine enemies; shewing to whom this commandment of Paul is sent, 'Rejoice evermore.' It is not in this as Christ saith, 'That which I say unto you, I say unto all;' but that which I say unto you, I say not unto all. 'Give wine,' saith Solomon, 'unto him that is sorrowful, that he may forget his grief,' Prov. xxxi. 6; so give comfort unto him which is penitent, that he may forget his fear. Solomon saith five times, that this is the portion of man under the sun, to receive the gifts of God with thankfulness, and to rejoice in them. He which would have us holy as he is holy, Lev. xi., 1 Peter i. 16, would have us joyful as he is joyful; he which would have us to do his will upon earth, as the angels do it in heaven, would have us rejoice upon earth, as the angels rejoice in heaven; he which hath ordained us to the kingdom of saints, would have us rejoice that we have such a kingdom to receive. Therefore he saith to his disciples, 'Rejoice that your names are written in the book of life,' Luke x. 20. As Boaz said unto Ruth, 'Go not out of this field to glean in any other field, for here thou shalt have enough,' Ruth ii. 8, so he would not have us go from this comfort unto any other comfort, for here we shall have enough. The Spirit of God is called the Comforter, because we should have comfort in it. 'I will send you the Comforter,' saith Christ, John xiv. 16, to shew that they which have the Spirit have comfort too, and they which resist com-

fort resist the Spirit; therefore the Son of God is called 'The consolation of Israel,' Luke ii. 25, to shew that he brings consolation with him, and that joy is where Christ is, as light is where the sun is; therefore the chiefest joy is called 'The joy of the Holy Ghost,' Rom. xiv. 17, to shew that they have the chiefest joy which have the Holy Ghost; therefore the greatest peace is called 'The peace of conscience,' Philip. iv. 7, to shew that they have the greatest peace which have a good conscience; therefore the faithful are said to be 'anointed with the oil of joy,' Isa. lxi. 3, as though joy were in their countenance; therefore they are said to be 'clothed with the garment of gladness,' as though gladness did compass them like a garment; therefore Paul, in all his epistles, doth join 'grace and peace' together, Rom. i. 7, 1 Cor. i. 3, 2 Cor. i. 2, Gal. i. 3, Eph. i. 2, Col. i. 2, 2 Thes. i. 2, Titus i. 4, Philem. 3, and shew that the peace of God doth follow them which have the grace of God. It is not in vain that the Holy Ghost, when he named Barnabas, interpreted his name too, because it signifieth 'the son of consolation,' Acts iv. 36; as though he delighted in such men as were the sons of consolation. 'Comfort one another,' saith Paul, 1 Thes. iv. 18. How shall we comfort one another without comfort? Therefore Paul saith, 'God comforteth us, that we may be able to comfort others, by the comfort whereby we ourselves are comforted of God,' 2 Cor i. 4, shewing that we cannot comfort others unless we be comfortable ourselves; and therefore, that we may perform this duty, we are bound to nourish comfort in ourselves. Paul saith, 'I am full of comfort,' 2 Cor. vii. 4; who then can say, I am full of sorrow, but he must contrary Paul? As the body may not offend the soul, so the soul may not injure the body, because it is the body's keeper; but a pensive man doth injure the body and the soul too; for Solomon saith, 'A sound spirit will bear his infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear?' Prov. xviii. 14: as if he should say, The heart must be kept courageous, and strong, and lively, like an instrument which is tuned to tune all the rest, or else every grief will make thee impatient. In Deut. xxx. 9 it is said, that God 'rejoiceth to do us good;' and therefore, in Deut. xxviii., the Jews are reproved, because they rejoiced not in the service of God. As he loveth a cheerful giver, so he loveth a cheerful server, and a cheerful preacher, and a cheerful hearer, and a cheerful worshipper; and therefore David saith, 'Let us sing heartily unto the Lord,' Ps. xcv. 1; shewing, as it were, the tune which delighteth God's ears. If you would know with what tune ye should sing unto God, David saith, *heartily;* that is, you must give heartily, you must love heartily, you must

obey heartily, you must pray heartily; and when you do all things heartily, then you shall do all things cheerfully.

Therefore, now I may say unto them which resist comfort, and nourish grief, as the prophet saith, 'Who hath required these things of you?' Isa. i. 12. God doth require no sorrow, but the sorrow for sin, no fear but the fear to sin, no care but the care to please him; nay, he hath forbidden all other care; and therefore Peter saith, 'Cast your care upon him,' 1 Peter v. 7. As though God did not allow us to care, he sent his apostle with this charge, 'Cast your care upon him.' As we do cast our sins upon Christ, so we must cast our care upon him; for God hath commanded us to labour, but not to care, because care hindereth our labour, like the Samaritans, which seemed to help the Jews to build the temple, and hindered them to build the temple, Neh. iv. So care, and sorrow, and thought seem to help us in our labours, and our studies, and our prayers, and our strife, but indeed they hinder us; for they take all the time from that which we should do, and disable us to do it; and therefore, when care cometh to us, we should answer it as Christ said unto Satan, 'Avoid, Satan!' Mat. iv. Avoid, care! for every care which is not of God, is of Satan, and we may not bear that which God commandeth us to cast upon him. Should I hang my joy, my faith, and my hope, because I have sinned, as Judas hanged himself? The Scripture saith not, Let him which hath stolen despair of mercy; but, 'Let him which hath stolen steal no more,' and it is enough, Eph. iv. 28. As we are taught to discern of spirits and of doctrines, so we must discern of cares and sorrows; for when Paul saith, 'There is a repentance not to be repented of,' 2 Cor. vii. 10, he shewed that there is a repentance to be repented of, that is, a repentance which is a sin, like the tears of Esau, which wept not for his sins, but for his patrimony, Gen. xxv. 33; Gen. xxvii. 34. When we sorrow for anything but for sin, as Esau did, then our sorrow is murmuring; and when we sorrow more for sin than we should, as some do, then our sorrow is distrust, which hurteth us more than the thing which we sorrow for; for 'the sorrow of the heart,' saith Solomon, 'is the consuming of the bones,' Prov. xvii. 22; not only the consuming of the soft flesh, but the consuming of the hard bones; that is, it will pull down the strongest man that is; and he which entertaineth it shall quickly say with Naomi, 'Call me no more beautiful, but bitter,' Ruth i. 20; Call me no more strong, but weak; for it will change him like a sickness. Therefore, as Christ refused the vinegar, and would not drink it when he tasted it, so let no man drink of sorrow before he taste it; but if anything eat thee up, let the zeal

of God's house eat thee up, Ps. lxix. 9; for thy charge is not to get thy living with the care of thy mind, but with the sweat of thy brows, Gen. iii. 19. Now, as James saith, 'Resist the devil, and he will fly from you,' James iv. 7, so resist sorrow, and it will fly from you. This is all the care, and all the fear, and all the repentance which ever I could find in the Scripture. Therefore, let us pray God every day to turn all our joy into the joy of the Holy Ghost, and all our peace into the peace of conscience, and all our sorrow into the sorrow for sin, and all our fear into the fear to sin, that so we may sorrow and rejoice together, fear and hope together; that is, have one eye to the law, to keep us from presumption, and another eye to the gospel, to keep us from despair; and then this comfort is sent to us, 'Rejoice evermore,' or else we have nothing to do with it.

It followeth, *pray continually.* As Elisha would not prophesy until the musician came, and while the musician played Elisha prophesied; so, when the heart rejoiceth in God, then it is fittest to call upon God; and therefore Paul putteth *rejoice* before *pray,* like the musician which played before Elisha prophesied. After *rejoice continually,* he biddeth us *pray continually;* shewing that it must be such a rejoicing continually, that we may pray continually too, or else he doth not allow us to rejoice. How can these two join together, *pray* and *rejoice?* Some, if they should pray, cannot rejoice for their hearts; nay, their hearts are sick until their prayers be done, although they pray not themselves, but hear another pray for them: this is the difference between the rejoicing of the wicked and the rejoicing of the godly.

The comfort of the wicked is like a compound medicine, made of many mixtures; for there must be piping, and dancing, and playing, and feasting, and dallying at their game, or else they cannot be merry; but the comfort of the faithful is like a light in the air, which shines when no matter is seen; so the godly rejoice when no cause is seen; if they do but think upon God, they rejoice straight. If there be but a prayer, and a thankfulness, and a meditation, there are instruments enow for them, and they can be as merry as birds in May. The reason of it is this: as Christ said, 'I have another meat which you know not of,' John iv. 32, so the godly have another joy which the world knows not of. Of this joy a man may rejoice continually. And therefore Solomon saith, 'A good conscience is a continual feast,' Prov. xv. 15; that is, a continual joy. But of the wicked's joy he saith, 'In laughter their heart is sorrowful;' that is, their laughter is sorrow; as if he should say

The wicked never rejoice indeed, but counterfeit joy, as they counterfeit virtue. Thus Paul joineth *rejoice continually*, with *pray continually;* as if he should say, By this thou shalt know whether thou rejoice well, if thou canst pray too; that is, if thy rejoicing move thee to prayer, as the joy of angels makes them praise God and sing, 'Holy, holy, holy,' unto him. This is according to that in the fifth of James, 'If any man be merry, let him sing psalms,' James v. 13. Mark how James joineth mirth and psalms, as Paul joineth rejoicing and praying. All this doth conclude, that as we should do God's will 'in earth as it is done in heaven,' so we should rejoice in earth as they rejoice in heaven, and then this joy is a sign of another joy; but if we cannot rejoice in praying, how shall we rejoice in suffering? I am now in a large field, where I might shew you to whom we should pray, and the cause why we should pray, and the things which we should pray for, and the mediator which we should pray by, and the affections which we should bring to prayer; but I will keep myself within my text, which saith no more but 'Pray continually.' First, we are commanded to pray, and then we are commanded to pray continually; of all our duties, this is only God's duty, which is given to none but God, according to that, 'Him only shalt thou serve,' Mat. iv. 10. Such an excellent thing is prayer, that it is offered to none but to him which Solomon calleth Excellent, Prov. xxvi. 10.

Secondly, It is such a pleasant thing, that Paul joineth, *pray continually*, with *rejoice continually*, to shew that no man hath such joy, as he which is often talking with God by prayer; as if he should say, If thou have the skill to pray continually, it will make thee rejoice continually; for in the company of God is nothing but joy and gladness of heart.

Thirdly, It is such a necessary thing, that Christ calleth his temple, 'The house of prayer,' to shew, that as we sell in our shops, and as we buy in the market, and as we eat in our parlours, and as we sleep in our chambers, and as we walk in our galleries, so we should pray in the temple; which is such a necessary trade for men, that God built a house for it, and called it, 'The house of prayer,' as though prayer brought God and us to dwell continually in one house together.

Further, he hath made a day for it in every week, as though he would bind us to pray; and because we cannot pray before we be sanctified, therefore he set down an order for us to observe and keep, which is this, that before every Sabbath he appointed an-

other day beside, in which we should provide ourselves to sanctify and prepare us, that we might pray in so effectual manner as we ought.

Fourthly, If we endeavour ourselves to live uprightly, and in the fear of God, according to the precise rule of his commandments, we shall find it such an heavenly life, that it will make us like the angels which are in heaven. For when we read, God speaketh to us, because we read his word; but when we pray, we speak to God, because we commence our suit to him; and so prayer makes us like the angels, which are always singing to God. Now if the company of wise men can so change one, that in a short time he representeth their speeches and qualities, how will their nature and their manners alter, which are still talking with God, like the beloved disciple which leaned on Christ's bosom?

Fifthly, It is such a sweet thing, above other things that we do for God, that in Rev. vii. the prayers of the saints are called 'incense,' because when they ascend to heaven, God seems to smell a sweet savour like incense.

Sixthly, It is such a profitable thing, that it doth more good than alms; for with mine alms I help but three or four, but with my prayer I help thousands. Prayer is the rich man's alms as well as the poor man's; for Pharaoh begged for prayers, as well as Lazarus begged for crumbs.

Lastly, It is so victorious and powerful, that it overcometh God himself, which overcometh all things; for if we will overcome our Lord as Jacob did, Gen. xxxii. 28, we must overcome him with prayer. This God sheweth when he saith to Jeremiah, 'Pray not for this people,' Jer. xiv. 11;—shewing that the prayer of the righteous is of such force and power, that God is fain to forbid them to pray when he would not grant, lest he should be overcome. This Christ sheweth again when he resembleth his Father to the deaf judge, and his suppliants to the importunate woman which cried upon him, and made him hearken unto her, as if she had compelled him, Luke xviii. 2, 3. Therefore one compareth prayer unto Samson's hair. As all Samson's strength lay in his hair, Judges xvi. 17, so all our strength lieth in prayer. I have read of many which write that they did learn more by praying than they could by reading; and I have heard some say, that they have done that by prayer which they could not do by counsel. In Exodus xvii., we read that the Jews prevailed more by prayer than they could by fight. Therefore one saith, that he which can pray can do all things, because he can overcome God, which helpeth him to do all

things; and he which can overcome God can overcome the devil too, which hindereth all things.

Who ever fell into heresy, or into apostasy, or into despair, before he fell from prayer, the preservative of the soul? 'If thou hadst been here,' saith Martha to Christ, 'my brother had not died,' John xi. 32; so if prayer had been here, these evils had not happened. This is the holy water which driveth away unclean spirits, as Christ sheweth when he speaketh of the devil, which is 'not cast out but by fasting and prayer,' Mat. xvii. 21. This is the cross which saveth us from evil, as Christ sheweth when he teacheth us to pray (as it is written in the 11th of Luke), 'Deliver us from evil.' This is the oil which healeth our sickness, as James sheweth in his 5th chap. ver. 25, when he saith, 'The prayer of faith shall save the sick.' It hath such a hand in all things, that it is like the sanctifier of everything. It blesseth our thoughts, and blesseth our speeches, and blesseth our actions. As Abraham blessed his servant before he went from him, Gen. xxiv., so prayer blesseth our works before they go from us. Whatsoever thou doest before thou hast blessed it with prayer, thou hast no promise that it shall prosper or do good, because he which should bless it is not made a counsel to it. Therefore we should not presume to use any of God's gifts, or any of God's graces, without prayer, lest that which is good do not good but hurt unto us.

For this cause St Paul, in the 14th of the Romans, and the 6th verse, teacheth us to pray before we eat. For this cause Paul prayed before he journeyed, Acts xx. 26, 38; for this cause Elias prayed before he sacrificed, as it appeareth in the 1st book of Kings, xviii. 36; for this cause the Israelites prayed before they fought; and for this cause we pray before we preach. It is a good thing to preach, and yet you see we do not presume to preach before we pray; because 'Paul planteth, Apollos watereth; but God giveth the increase,' 1 Cor. iii. 6. Even so, we should not presume to give alms, nor to give counsel, nor to give help, before we have prayed that it may do good. Nay, we should not presume to exercise our faith, nor our repentance, nor our obedience, without prayer because there is no faith so perfect but it had need of prayer to strengthen it. Also, there is no love so perfect but it had need of prayer to confirm it. There is no repentance so perfect but it had need of prayer to continue it; there is no obedience so perfect but it had need of prayer to direct it. Therefore he doth sin which presumeth to do any good work without prayer, because he seems to do it by his own power; for that he craveth not assistance from

God, which giveth power to faith to bring forth works, as well as he doth to trees to bring forth fruits, or to physic to bring forth health. Therefore no virtue hath done so much as prayer hath done, for all virtues have had their power from prayer; and therefore one saith, that prayer hath done as many exploits as all virtues beside.

The apostle Paul, in Heb. xi., saith, that by faith Noah did this, and Abraham did this, and David did this, and Enoch did this; but did their faith anything without prayer? For their faith was strengthened by prayer, and therefore the disciples prayed Christ to strengthen their faith, Luke xvii. 5. By prayer Elias made the clouds to fall, 1 Kings xviii. 45; by prayer Joshua made the sun to stand still, Joshua x. 12, 13; by prayer Elisha raised the dead to life, 2 Kings iv. 33–35; by prayer Moses made the enemies to fly, Exod. xvi. 11; by prayer Solomon obtained wisdom, 1 Kings iii. 12. So that, as Paul, 1 Tim. iv., saith of godliness, 'Godliness is profitable to all things,' so I may say of prayer, Prayer is profitable to all things. The dove could find no rest for the sole of her foot until she returned to the ark, Gen. viii. 9; so the sinner, when he can fly no longer, nor suffer any longer, nor help himself any longer, at last he turneth to prayer, which is like the city of refuge, Num. xxxix. 11, where no enemy, where no adversity, and where no tentation, hath power to hurt him.

Lastly, As prayer is excellent in respect of God, to whom only it is offered, so it is excellent in respect of the godly, who only offer it. For as Paul saith of faith, in the second to the Thessalonians, 'All men have not faith,' so I may say of prayer, All men have not the gift of prayer; and therefore Zechariah speaketh of a 'spirit of prayer,' Zech. xii. 10; and when we pray, Paul saith, that 'the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and prayeth in us,' Rom. viii. 29; as though there were a peculiar spirit for prayer, and none could pray but they which had that spirit.

I have known many wicked men hear, and I have known many wicked men study, and I have known many wicked men fast, and I have known many wicked men preach, and I have known many wicked men counsel; but I did never know any wicked man that could pray well, nor any that could pray well, live wickedly. This Peter proveth in his first epistle and fourth chapter, when he saith, 'Be sober and watchful in prayer;' shewing, that all cannot pray, but they which are sober and watchful.

This Peter the apostle proveth again in his first epistle and third chapter, when he exhorteth the husband and wife to love one another, lest their prayers be interrupted; shewing that sin doth

hinder our prayer, and that a man cannot pray heartily, when wrath, and malice, or lust doth carry his mind away. This Paul witnesseth again when he saith, 'How should they call upon him in whom they have not believed?' shewing that none can pray but they which have faith, and that it is a sign that the Spirit is within, if he can pray; and therefore one saith, so long as God doth not take away thy praying, he hath not taken away his mercy. Seeing then that prayer is such a sacrifice as is offered to none but God, and none can offer it but they which have faith, and love, and repentance, to bring it to him; as Aaron did not stand before the Lord before he was washed, Exod. xxix. 4, so let no man call upon God before he be sanctified. For as Isaac did first taste Jacob's meat, and then blessed him when he liked his offering, Gen. xxvii. 25, so God will have an offering which pleaseth him, before he give the blessing which pleaseth us. Therefore, as Jacob charged his sons when they went unto Joseph, 'Take the best fruits of the land and give unto him,' Gen. xliii. 11, so I advise myself and you, when we go to God, let us take the best fruits of our hearts and give unto him, that is, not the show of repentance, but repentance indeed.

As Abraham left his ass at the foot of the hill when he went to sacrifice, so when we go to pray, we must leave our passions, and affections, and lusts behind, lest they trouble us, like the fowls which hindered Abraham in his sacrifice. And when our prayers do please God, as Jacob's meat pleased his father, then God will hear our prayers and bless us, as his father blessed him.

Now, to inform us what prayer delighteth God, the apostle Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians, and the seventh chapter, shewing that he had the mind of Christ, teacheth us to pray continually. This he expoundeth in the second epistle to the Thessalonians, the third chapter and the thirteenth verse, when he saith, 'Be not weary of well doing.' Therefore, if you do well when you pray, you must not be weary of praying.

The like saying is in Rom. xii., where it is said, 'Continue in prayer.' The like saying is in Rom. i., where it is said, 'Pray at all times.' The like saying also is in Luke xviii., where it is said, 'Pray always, and be not faint.' We are not commanded to preach continually, nor ye to hear continually, nor to fast continually, nor to watch continually, nor to give continually; but we are commanded to pray continually, as though prayer were more needful than all the rest. We want continually, and we are tempted continually, and we sin continually; and therefore we had need to pray

to God continually, that God would supply our wants, and forgive our sins, and prevent our temptations.

To shew that we should pray daily, Christ teacheth us in Luke xi. to say, 'Give us this day our daily bread.' This day we ask no more but our daily bread; and if we live till the morrow, then we ask no more but our daily bread. So the word *daily* doth teach us to pray daily; for there is great reason that they which have continually need of God, should pray continually unto him. But as some answered Christ, as it appeareth in St John's Gospel, 'Who is able to do this?' so you will say unto me, Who is able to pray continually?

Saint Paul, in Rom. xii., teacheth us a reasonable service of God. Here he seems to enjoin us an unreasonable service of God. For who did ever pray continually? or if we should pray continually, when should we hear, or preach, or when should we study, or when should we work? So one service seems to hinder all services; but indeed it doth further all services, and therefore we are commanded to pray continually, because we can do nothing without prayer. But if you imagine that this commandment is broken, if your lips be not always going, which was the heresy of the Messalians, or if you dwell not always in the church, like the golden candlesticks, then you are out of Paul's mind, for Paul did not pray continually with his lips, and therefore he doth not mean a lip prayer; neither did Paul live day and night in the temple, and therefore he doth not mean a church prayer; and further, it seems that the Jews were not appointed to pray at all times, for they had set times of prayer; and therefore we read how 'Peter and John went up to the temple at the time of prayer,' Acts iii. 1; therefore to pray continually, is to lift up our hearts continually unto God, and to pray in our thought, as Moses did, though we open not our lips; and so we pray continually. As when a good man is to answer before his persecutor, a thought prayeth in his heart that he may answer wisely; when he is to give alms, a thought prayeth in his heart that it may do good; when he is to give counsel, a thought prayeth in his heart that it may prosper; when he is to hear a sermon, a thought prayeth in his heart that he may be edified and sanctified by it. Thus we may pray and hear, pray and speak, pray and eat, pray and study, pray and work together, as the Jews built and fought together, Neh. iv. 7. And therefore prayer seems a harder thing than it is. For if it had been irksome for any to pray, Paul would not have joined praying and rejoicing

together. It is not hard which a man may do and rejoice too. If a man love entirely, he hath no such delight as to talk often, and to confer daily with him whom he loveth; for by this his love is increased, and his joy is doubled; but the seldomer we commune together, by little and little our affections abate, till at last we become strange one to the other, as though we had never been acquainted. Even so our affections and familiarity doth grow towards God by often praying unto him; and when we leave off to pray, then our affections draw from him, and his affections from us; therefore we read how often the good men were wont to pray in times past. Daniel saith, that he prayed thrice a day, Dan. vi. 19; David saith, that he prayed seven times a day, Ps. cxix. 164; it is said that Cornelius prayed continually; it is said that the disciples prayed continually; and in Rom. i. Paul, which teacheth us here to pray without ceasing, saith, that he himself prayed without ceasing. As Jacob would not let the angel go before he had blessed him; so a Christian should not let God rest before he hear him. This is the state that a Christian should strive to, and never think that he is sound at the heart till all his thoughts be a kind of prayer. Now if we should examine ourselves whether we pray as we should, as Paul teacheth us to examine ourselves whether we believe as we should, 1 Cor. xi. 28, I am of opinion, that there is no such want in this land as the want of prayer; for it is neglected, as though it were never commanded, as if there were no God to worship, or as if we had no need of him. In the papists' time none were called beadsmen (that is, men which were bound to pray), but the poor men; as though none were bound to pray but poor men; but now the world goeth, as though neither rich nor poor were bound to pray. One would think that our deliverance out of Egypt, that our victory against the Spaniards, that the weather which threateneth sickness, that the dearth which threateneth famine, should make us pray, and yet doth not; for where is the person that prayeth now more than he did before? Some are like the fool, which 'saith in his heart, There is no God,' Ps. xiv. 1; for they *pray never*, though Paul say, *pray ever*. Cain was rejected for offering an unworthy sacrifice, Gen. iv. What shall be done to them which offer no sacrifice at all? Some are like exorcists, which cannot adjure but in a circle; so they cannot pray but in the church, and then they pray when they should hear. Some are like the Ephraimites, which can pronounce every word but that which they should, Judges xii. 6; so they never want words but when they speak to God. It is strange to think how

lively they are to everything else, and how dead they are to pray. As many come to sermons, and never mark what the preacher saith, until he come to this, *To whom be all praise, power, and dominion for ever;* so many pray, and never mark what they say, until they come to this, *Give us this day our daily bread.* Dost thou think that God doth mark that prayer which thou dost not mark thyself? Some come to God as if they did fetch fire, a spurt and away, like a messenger which is gone before he have his answer. If God will take a *Pater noster* of them, and hear them for that, so it is, for they never made any other prayer in their lives, but even as a child sayeth grace, so say they, *Our Father;* put them out of that, and they cannot pray a word, no more than a child can make a grace, if he be put out of his own. Some are like Nadab and Abihu, which never look with what fire their sacrifice is kindled, Num. iii. 4; so they never respect with what motion their prayer is kindled, whether it be from the Spirit or from the flesh, but sometime they pray of malice for revenge, sometime of greediness for riches, sometime of lust for pleasure. Now, as no sacrifice was accepted with God, but that which was kindled with the fire which came down from heaven, Lev. iii. 5, so no prayer is accepted with God, but that which is kindled with some motion from heaven. Their prayer never ascendeth to heaven; for Abel's heart made Abel's offering accepted, Gen. iv. 4. Some are like the builders of Babel, which call for one thing, when they should call for another, Gen. xi. 3; so they pray for one thing, when they should pray for another; when they called for stones, they brought them timber; when they called for timber, they brought them stones. So, when they call for health, God sends them sickness; when they call for rest, God sends them trouble; when they call for riches, God sends them wants; when they call for honour, God sends them shame; when they call for ease, God sends them a yoke; for it is a just thing with God, that they which do one thing for another, should receive one thing for another. Some are like the prodigal son, which prayed but until he got his patrimony, and then he forsook his father which gave it him, Luke xv. 12; so they pray no longer but until they have that which they would have, and then they fly from God, as he did from his father, and live like swine in another country, till extremity and penury send them home again. These are the beadsmen of our age, and these are the prayers which we offer to him which made heaven and earth. Wouldst thou regard his suit which should entreat thee so contemptuously as thou entreatest God? Let us consider how that prayer should obtain

remission of sin, which is sin itself. Paul saith, 'Let all which call upon the name of the Lord, depart from iniquity,' 2 Tim. ii. 19; as if he should say, The Lord will hear none which pray unto him, but them which depart from iniquity. Solomon saith, 'The prayer of the wicked is an abomination,' Prov. xxviii. 9. If his best work be an abomination, what are his worst deeds, and the sinner himself? Therefore, he adviseth, 'Prepare thy heart before thou go into the temple, lest thou offer the sacrifice of fools,' Eccles. v. 1; as if he should say, He which offereth a present unto a prince, which the prince likes not, is a fool for his pains. This is the cause, saith one, why God doth not hear our prayers as he did our fathers, because we pray not with such humility and perseverance as they did. Many touched Christ, yet but one drew virtue out of him; so many pray unto Christ, but few draw comfort from him.

Now, if you will know what prayer is accepted with God, James saith, 'The prayer of the just availeth much, if it be fervent,' James v. 16. He saith not that the prayer of the wicked availeth anything, though it be never so fervent; but the person must be just, the prayer must be fervent too: by this thou knowest then whether thy prayer be accepted with God. As God sent down fire from heaven to consume Elijah his sacrifice, because it pleased him, 1 Kings xviii. 38, so he will send down a kind of joy and lightness upon thy heart, which shall kindle thee within, as the fire kindled Elijah's sacrifice, and send thee away with such a joy, like a suitor which cometh from the prince when his petition is granted. This is the end of every prayer which is made in faith. As Christ answered the centurion, 'Be it unto thee as thou believest,' so thy heart shall answer thee, 'Be it unto thee as thou believest.' When we begin to pray, we are going from the devil; and when we end our prayer, we are come to God. At first many temptations will hinder thee, but with earnestness thou shalt drive them away. 'Then make no haste,' as Solomon saith, 'to get out of the king's presence;' for the Lord and thy prayer are met together in heaven, like Christ and the woman at Jacob's well, John iv.

Seeing, then, that prayer is such an excellent thing, that it is given to none but to him which is called *excellent;* and such a pleasant thing, that Paul joineth *pray continually* with *rejoice continually;* and such an heavenly thing, that it makes us like the angels which are in heaven; and such a necessary thing, that God built a house for it, and made a day for it; and such a holy thing, that none but the holy can deal with it; and such a strong thing, that it overcometh God which overcometh all; how is it,

then, that our fathers spent so much time in prayer, and we make no account of it? Have we nothing to pray for as well as they? Nay, they prayed for nothing but we had need to pray for the like. The Turks and idolaters pray to them that cannot hear; but he which saith, 'I will hear,' hath not so many supplications to him as noblemen. What will we give God, if we will not afford him thanks? What will we do for him, if we will not praise him? 'If thou be wise,' saith Solomon, 'thou art wise unto thyself;' so if we do pray, we do pray for ourselves. Shall the birds sing unto God, and not they for whom he created birds? What a fool is he which will fight, and travel, and watch for himself, and will not speak for himself? If God had required such costly sacrifices of us as he did of the Jews, it is to be feared that he would not be served at all; for we are such Gergesites, that we would not part from our beasts to sacrifice to him. Therefore, let us not say, God will not hear, but let us say, We do not ask; for God is readier to give than we to ask. Therefore, let us pray that our neglect of prayer may be forgiven.

# THE BETRAYING OF CHRIST.

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*When the morning was come, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. And led him away bound, and delivered him unto Pontius Pilate the governor. Then when Judas, which betrayed him, saw that he was condemned, he repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned, betraying the innocent blood. But they said, What is that to us? see thou to it.*—MAT. XXVII. 1–4.

THE last time you heard how a publican received Christ; now you shall hear how an apostle betrayeth Christ. But first here is set down what the priests and the elders did against Christ, of whom it is said, 'When the morning was come, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death, and led him away bound, and delivered him unto Pontius Pilate the governor.' The priests were ecclesiastical persons, and the elders were civil magistrates; so they which should have stood most for Christ, stood most against him. Mark putteth in the scribes too, Mark xv. 1, and Luke putteth in the whole multitude, Luke xxii. 66; as if he should say, the priests, and the scribes, and the pharisees, and the elders and the people. He which stood for all, had all against him. Here is fulfilled that which was prophesied in the second Psalm, 'They banded themselves against the Lord, and against his Anointed,' Ps. ii. 2. But why did they band themselves against the Lord, or against his Anointed? What was their desire of him? To have his goods? No, he had none for himself; but they were richer than he. To have his liberty? Nay, that would not suffice them; for they had bound him before. To bring the people into dislike of him? Nay, that would not

serve them; for they had done so already, until even his disciples were fled from him. What would they have then? his blood? Yea, 'they took counsel,' saith Matthew, 'to put him to death.' They had the devil's mind, which is not satisfied but with death. And how do they contrive it? He saith, 'They took counsel about it.'

When Pharaoh did most foolishly, he said, 'Come, let us work wisely,' Exod. i. 10. So when they did worst, then they seemed to do it in best manner, for they will not sin without counsel. A wise counsel to consult of murder, like the papists' counsels when they give licence for treason. They may be fitlier said to take arms than to take counsel. For Christ saith before, that they came with swords and staves to take him, Mat. xxvi. 55. David speaks of a malignant church, that is, a church of malicious persons; such a church was this, for they called themselves the church, and went about to kill the head of the church. In the beginning of the night Christ instituted the sacrament, and consulted how to save *them;* and at midnight they instituted their treason, and consulted how to destroy *him.* The time which they chose, and the judge which they chose, are specially to be noted. The time, 'In the morning,' &c.

This therefore is not to be expounded of the beginning of their counsel, but of the end of their counsel; for they took counsel in the night, and executed it in the morning. When they agreed to go unto Pilate, it was night; but when they brought him to Pilate, it was morning. But mark how unjustly they handled him before they brought him to the judge. They should have done nothing against him before he came to his judgment; but they did all against him, except condemning him and crucifying him, before they came to the judge. For all that is spoken before of examining him, and mocking him, and reviling him, and buffeting him, and spitting in his face, was done before they came to the judge, which shews, that they were even angry that they could not kill him without the judge too.

All this was done in the night, and therefore Christ said to his disciples in the evening, 'This night all of you shall be offended for me,' Mat. xxvi. 31; shewing that all these things should be done in the night. Therefore St Mark saith, that Peter, and James, and John were asleep, when Judas and his companions came against him, Mark xiv. 41; which sheweth it was the time of sleep; and in the 51st verse he saith, that a young man ran after with a linen garment upon his bare body, which sheweth that he, hearing a tumult and an uproar to grow in the night, ran forth of doors in

great haste without his clothes, as they do in a fire (to see what was done), and it is added, that they strove to take him, and that he was fain to slip off his linen, and run away from them naked, as Joseph did when he left his cloak with his light mistress, when he slipped from her; which sheweth how void of shame and modesty they were, to offer such violence to a stranger, that he could scarce scape their hands naked, although they had nothing against him. This I note, to shew that their conspiracy against Christ was a night-work, like them which hate the light because they do evil. It was not their wont to sit in counsel in the night, but in the day. It would have troubled them to watch so long for a good cause; but it was fit that the work of darkness should be done in darkness; and therefore Christ saith, 'This is the hour of darkness,' Luke xxii. 53; the hour of darkness, the power of darkness, and the work of darkness met together. When they should rest, malice would not suffer them to rest, but they became like owls, which watch in the night, and cannot sleep. Here was fulfilled Solomon's saying, 'They cannot sleep before they have done evil,' Prov. iv. 16. So eager we are upon revenge, more than anything else. They say that he cannot stay which rideth upon the devil; for malice driveth him, and fury spurs him. Therefore Zaccheus went not so hastily to receive Christ, as his enemies haste to destroy him; nay, rather I may say, to destroy themselves; for as they prayed at Christ's death, so it came upon them. They said, 'His blood be upon us and our children,' Mat. xxvii. 25; so his blood is upon them, and upon their children, which have been vagabonds over the earth ever since, and have no country of their own. For if they be cursed which do the Lord's business negligently, Jer. xlviii. 10, they must be cursed too which do the devil's business diligently.

If men were so hasty in executing justice, as they were in executing malice, so many men should not be undone by suits of law; for in one day they could apprehend, and accuse, and examine, and condemn, and execute him which was innocent; but he which is just cannot be quit in one term or two; nay, if he have right in a year, it is counted quick despatch, and he is glad that he met with such a speedy lawyer. How then when they take a bad cause in hand, and prolong it too, which keeps their clients in suspense from day to day, and from week to week, in great charge and sin together? I would to God that some did not sit in counsel against good Christians, as those priests did against Christ; but God in his mercy daily doth confound and bring to nothing the accursed counsels of the wicked antichrist, and all his rebellious confederates. So when

the wicked took counsel together, wickedness was the end of their counsels; for there is nothing worse to the ungodly, than to meet together; for before they meet, their wickedness is a little hid, like the poison in a serpent; but when they meet together, one setteth another on, and the poison breaks forth into vile speeches, and detestable works, and ungodly practices; as we see in taverns, and such like assemblies as this.

For now they are met together, they have conspired amongst themselves to accuse unto the governor the most innocent man in the world, as if he were the worst man living; they abused him, and mocked him, and reviled him, and buffeted him, before they brought him to the governor; which sheweth that they would have killed him too, if they durst, without the governor; but sin is crafty, and therefore they observe the order of law and form of judgment, lest they should be taken in the snare which they made for him.

First, Because that Pilate had the authority over judgments of death, and not they, therefore they are enforced to seek unto his judgment-seat, to save themselves from blame, and to be delivered out of trouble, if they did usurp anything upon the magistrate's office.

Then, Because they might not run unto the governor before day without suspicion of tumult, they stayed until it was morning; but so soon as they could come, they came post-haste; for the sun did no sooner peep, but even at the very break of the day they were all ready to flock unto the judge against him. This they did without knowledge; but God directed everything unto a right end. For it was meet that the Son of God should be cleared in a solemn manner by an earthly judge, to shew how we shall be cleared by the heavenly judge; and therefore, as it appeareth Mat. xxvii. 23, Pilate saith that he 'found no evil in him,' before he gave sentence against him; which sheweth that he died not for his own sins, but for our sins: and therefore, though they went to the judge to save themselves from blame, yet God sent them to the judge that his word might be fulfilled.

Lastly, This Pilate was a Roman governor, which ruled for Cæsar, as Zaccheus was a Roman collector, which gathered for Cæsar; for at that time the Romans had brought much of the world into their subjection, as since that time they have brought much of the world into idolatry. And therefore God would have his Son to be judged by the Roman policy, and to be condemned by a Roman judge, and to be slain with a Roman death, as it were joining the Jews and the Romans in impiety together; to shew that these two nations

should be the odiousest people unto him in all the world, and how his servants should be crucified there where he was crucified himself; for as the Romans did crucify Christ upon the cross, so they crucify him now upon the altar, and resemble the dragon, which, when he could not prevail against Michael himself, then he fought against the woman and her seed, that is, the church and her children, which are slain in Rome, as the prophets were in Jerusalem, Rev. xii. Thus Rome began with the head, and ends with the members. So much of the priests, and the scribes, and the pharisees, and the elders, and Pilate, what they did against Christ, of whom was fulfilled David's prayer, 'Lord, turn the counsel of Ahithophel unto folly,' 2 Sam. xv. 31; so their counsel was turned unto folly. For as Paul revived when he was stoned, so Christ rose again when he was buried; to shew that there is no counsel against God. And therefore let all our counsels be for God.

Now we come to Judas. To aggravate this tragical counsel, the evangelist annexeth unto it the desperate end of the cursedest man that ever was. Three things are especially noted of this traitor: his death, the cause of his death, and the confession which he made before his death. His death, in the fifth verse: 'He went and hanged himself.' The cause of his death, in the third verse: For that he had betrayed his Lord, and now did see him condemned, and had no joy of the money which was given unto him for his treason. His confession, in the fourth verse: 'I have sinned in betraying the innocent blood.' I will speak of every word as they lie, for your memory. Therefore, first, of his treason: 'When Judas the traitor.' Before he was called Judas the apostle, now he is called Judas the traitor, to distinguish him from others of that name; lest any of his name should be defamed for him, a brand is set in his forehead like the letter *Tau*, or Cain's mark, Gen. iv., to make him hateful, like a rogue which is burned in the ear. So Esau was called *Edom*, which signifieth *red*, to keep his wickedness in remembrance, because he sold his birthright for a mess of red pottage. So Simon is called the sorcerer, Acts viii., as though God would note him for the worst of that name. So God knoweth Simon Peter from Simon Magus, and Judas his brother from Judas his betrayer; and therefore, as Jeroboam comes in with his train after him, 'Jeroboam which made Israel to sin,' 1 Kings xxii. 52, so Judas comes in with his train after him, Judas which betrayeth the Lord. For when God said, 'I will honour them which honour me,' he signifieth how he would dishonour them which dishonour him; and therefore this name is a word of reproach until this day,

and all traitors are called *Judases* for his sake, that the prophecy might be fulfilled, 'The names of the wicked shall rot,' Prov. x. 7; that is, they shall be named with loathsomeness, and remembered with disdain, as a man passeth by rotten carrion, and stoppeth his nose until he be past it. That is the just wrath of God. As Christ promised that Mary's good work should be spoken of to the world's end, so he hath caused Judas's evil work to be spoken of unto the world's end too. For there were three evils in one: first, his practice was impudent, because he offered himself to be a traitor before he was asked; then it was covetous, because he was contented to betray his Lord for thirty pence; and lastly, it was crafty, because he betrayed him with a kiss, which is a sign of love. Like this traitor do all other traitors, and therefore are all called *Judases*, that is, impudent, and covetous, and crafty, like their master.

The next consideration is, how Judas his repentance came upon him, in these words, 'When he saw that Jesus was condemned,' &c. Peter heard three crows before he felt any remorse; so Judas saw his Lord apprehended, and yet he repented not; then he saw him accused, and yet he repented not; then he saw him mocked, and yet he repented not; then he saw him buffeted, and yet he repented not; at last he saw him condemned, and then, saith Matthew, he repented: like one which slayeth his friend in his rage, and sorroweth when it is past. In Gen. vi., God is said to repent, but God repenteth not like men; so here the wicked are said to repent, but the wicked repent not like the faithful. But as it is said of Esau, that he sought repentance; so they may be rather said to repent,[1] than to repent indeed. For if Judas had repented like Peter, he should have been forgiven like Peter; but to shew that he did not repent well, when he had committed one sin, he addeth another to it; for when he had murdered his master, he murdered himself too. Therefore, if you ask how he repented, I think he repented so as most usurers repent, upon their death-beds. There is a shame of sin, and guilt of conscience, and fear of judgment, even in a reprobate, which is a foretaste of hell, which the wicked feel; even as the peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost is a foretaste of heaven, which the godly feel before they come thither. So Judas was displeased with the ugliness of his treachery, and had a mis-shapen sorrow, like a bear's whelp, but without any conversion to God, or hope of mercy, or prayer for pardon, or purpose to amend. Only he felt a shame, and guilt, and anguish in his heart, which was rather a punishment of sin, than a repentance for his sin, and

[1] Qu. 'to seek to repent'?—Ed.

a preparative to hell which he was going unto. For hardness of heart and despair of mercy are sins, and punishments for sin too; but true repentance is such a sorrow for one sin, as breedeth a dislike of all sins, and moveth to pray, and resolveth to amend, which falleth upon none but the elect. And therefore Paul calleth the heart of the reprobate, 'A heart which cannot repent.' But if the papists' doctrine of repentance be true, there is nothing wanting in Judas's repentance; for in him may be found all the parts of their repentance. For we see in this reprobate, contrition of heart, confession of mouth, and satisfaction of work, which is all the papists' repentance. For contrition, it is said, 'he repented;' for confession, he saith, 'I have sinned;' for satisfaction, he restored the money again; and yet he is Judas 'the son of perdition.' And therefore, as Christ told the lawyer, that one thing was wanting in his obedience; so Judas telleth the papists, that one thing is wanting in their repentance; that is, the conversion of a man to God, and change of mind; when a sinner renounceth himself for shame of his sin, and yieldeth to righteousness with as great love as ever he loved wickedness. If Judas had repented so, he would rather have suffered pain like Job, than by unlawful means rid himself out of pain like Cain, which thought to prevent God's judgment against him. This was not a sign of repentance, but a sign of despair. Therefore let every one learn this, that so long as God's mercy is greater than man's iniquity, there is no cause to despair, but to hope. For why did our Saviour save Mary Magdalene, which had seven devils, and spare the thief which never did good, but lest as great sinners as they should despair of mercy, if they repented? If thou canst knock, his promiseth bindeth him to open. Therefore say not, God will not give, but, I do not ask; for God is readier to give than we to ask.

The next consideration is, how Judas restored his bribe again. In the first of the Proverbs, ver. 31, Solomon saith, 'The wicked shall be filled with their own devices;' and in the fourteenth chapter, verse 14, he saith, 'They shall be satiate with their own ways;' for Judas hath sinned so long, that now he is weary of his sin, and would restore his bribe again, even the same day that he took it. It was given him in the night, and in the morning he brought it back; so soon is the pleasure of sin eclipsed. Even now his thirty pence was the sweetest silver that ever he fingered, and now it is the bitterest money that ever he pursed. Therefore, let all consider what Abner said unto Joab, 'Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end?' 2 Sam. ii. 26. The sting of the

serpent is in his tail, so the tail of sin hath the sting, that is, the end. There is no sin but it hath three punishments which follow it like handmaids, fear, shame, and guilt; fear of judgment, shame of men, and guilt of conscience. All these did surprise Judas at once, as suddenly as Adam spied his nakedness; and though they come after every sin, yet they are never looked for. Gehazi took his bribe merrily, but he did wear it heavily. Jezebel thought that she had got a vineyard for nothing, 1 Kings xxi., but she paid more for it than she would give for all the world. So Judas thought that he was made for ever, when he was undone for ever. Here was the scripture fulfilled, 'The bread of deceit is sweet to man, but his mouth shall be filled with gravel,' Prov. xx. 17. So this gain of treason was sweet to Judas, but when he digested it, it cracked like gravel in his teeth. Who would suffer for millions of gold that which Judas suffered for thirty pence? And yet many are content to sin for less. Judas was a traitor for thirty pence, but a thousand are liars, and deceivers, and swearers for a penny. If they can get anything by lies, or oaths, or wiles, it is like the mystery of their occupation. Be not deceived, the time cometh when you would restore this gain again, as Judas did, and peradventure you shall not find the owners where to make restitution. How many at the hour of death have offered their prayers and their supplications and service to God, as Judas offered his money to the priest, and God would not accept it! but they died as they lived, and went from despair unto destruction. Therefore, 'to-day hear his voice.' If you will not be so good as Zaccheus, to restore fourfold for all that you have gotten by usury, or bribery, or extortion, or deceit, yet be so good as Judas, to bring again so much as you have taken; and if you do it not with Judas's mind, but with Zaccheus's mind, it shall be accepted as Zaccheus was.

The last consideration is, the confession which he makes before his death, 'I have sinned,' &c. O Judas! saith one, dost thou know that thou hast sinned, and didst not know that thou shouldst sin? It is not enough to say, *I have sinned;* so said Saul, and Cain, and Pharaoh, *I have sinned.* But who saith, *I will not sin?* When sin is past, then we know; but if we did look to it before, then we need not say, *I have sinned;* for sin is chosen in the dark, like bad wares, when the faults are not seen. Sin seems no sin until it come to *I have sinned,* that is, until it be past. If Judas had shewed his repentance to God as he shewed it but to men, haply his offence might have found mercy; but he did separate himself farther from God by his despair, than he was separated

before by his treason, and chose rather to run unto them which would mock him, than unto him which should succour him; therefore his confession was without remission, and though he said, 'I have sinned,' yet God answers not, 'I have forgiven:' to shew that except our repentance be better than his, it shall not weigh against one sin. Yet Judas doth not only acknowledge himself a sinner, which is the most that many of us confess, because he would not be counted worse than others, but reckoned his sin without an accuser. As if one should come forth and say, I have stolen a horse; so he saith, I have betrayed my Master. In what did Judas sin? In treason. Then treason is sin; and yet the papists count it a merit, as though they should merit by sin. There was never any heretic which maintained treason but the papists. 'Touch not mine anointed,' saith God. Yes, kill his anointed, say they. How far are they from David, which would not lay his hand upon Saul! If he were a man after God's heart, as he is called, then they must be men after the devil's heart. After Judas had received meat of Christ, he went about to betray him; so after they have received peace and plenty and prosperity of their prince, they go about to betray her. As David's enemies longed and said, 'When will David die, and the name of David perish?' so they long and cry, When will Elizabeth die, and the name of Elizabeth perish? But Elizabeth liveth, and they die which seek her death.

John calls the pharisees a generation of vipers, which never are born, but their mother dieth for it. How right this fitteth with the papists? for they cannot live without the death of their mother. For the Spaniard which would slaughter them, they would slaughter the nurse which cherisheth them. 'Had Zimri peace,' saith Jezebel, 'which slew his master?' So I may say, Have they died in peace, which would have slain their mistress? They which have not hanged themselves like Judas, have been hanged by others, like Haman, as though they had been sent over but to visit Tyburn. So God hath blessed them that bless her, and cursed them which curse her. Therefore some traitors have confessed that they have sinned in betraying the Lord's anointed, as Judas confessed that he had sinned in betraying the Lord himself. He betrayed him as though he had not been innocent; and now he must die, he saith, 'I have betrayed the innocent blood.'

Innocent, indeed, for when he had asked his enemies which of them could accuse him of sin, they had nothing to answer. Innocent in life, innocent in speech, and innocent in thought; the

infants which be called innocents were not so innocent; therefore, how should he be innocent which betrayed the innocentest of all? We are taught to do good unto all, but especially to the good; but Judas was naught to all, but worse to the best. If he had betrayed any, he might say, I have sinned, because all dissimulation and guile is condemned, 1 Peter ii. 1. But when the innocents are betrayed, nay, when the innocentest is betrayed, it seemeth more than sin, because never any betrayed innocent Christ but Judas. Thus Christ was justified of his disciples and his enemies. He which betrayed him said he was innocent; he which condemned him said he was innocent. And the devils, which made Judas betray him and Pilate condemn him, said before, that he was the Son of God, and called him holy. Thus every sinner shall be condemned of himself before he be condemned of God, that the Lord may be justified when he judgeth. If Judas could have said, I believe, when he said, I have sinned, God would have answered him as Nathan answered David, 'Thy sins are forgiven;' but he confessed and amended not. What shall be to them which do not confess, but defend their sins? Is not thy sin worse than Judas's, when Judas saith, 'I have sinned,' and thou sayest, 'I have not sinned'? This is our manner, to plead *not guilty* so long as we live. Sins and excuses are twins, born at a birth, and one followeth another, as Zarah came after Pharez out of the womb, Gen. xxxviii. 30. Judas saith, 'I have sinned,' but we say, I have not sinned, or, I have sinned but a little, or, I have sinned against my will; so we mince our sins as though they needed no forgiveness. Solomon saith, 'I am more foolish than any man;' but we would be counted wiser than any man. Paul calleth himself the greatest sinner; but we would be judged the least sinners. So we are ashamed of sin, and yet not ashamed to sin. If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. Be not deceived, for sin doth not end as it begins. When the terrors of Judas come upon the soul, the tongue cannot hide his sins, for despair and horror will not be smothered; but he which hath Saul's spirit haunting him, will rage as Saul did. There is a warning conscience and a gnawing conscience. The warning conscience cometh before sin, the gnawing conscience followeth after sin. The warning conscience is often lulled asleep, but the gnawing conscience wakeneth her again. If there be any hell in this world, they which feel the worm of conscience gnaw upon their hearts may truly say, that they have felt the torments of hell. Who can express that man's horror but himself? Nay, what horrors are there which he cannot express himself? Sorrows are met in

his soul at a feast; and fear, thought, and anguish, divide his soul between them. All the furies of hell leap upon his heart like a stage. Thought calleth to fear; fear whistleth to horror; horror beckoneth to despair, and saith, Come and help me to torment the sinner. One saith, that she cometh from this sin, and another saith, that she cometh from that sin, so he goeth through a thousand deaths and cannot die. Irons are laid upon his body like a prisoner. All his lights are put out at once; he hath no soul fit to be comforted. Thus he lies as it were upon the rack, and saith, that he bears the world upon his shoulders, and that no man suffereth that which he suffereth. So let him lie, saith God, without ease, until he confess, and repent, and call for mercy. This is the goodly way which the serpent said would make you gods, and made him a devil. Therefore, at the last, learn the sleight of Satan in this wretched traitor. His subtilties are well called the depths of Satan, for he is so deep that few can sound him. Now he lets Judas see his sin; before, he hid it from him. Until he had sinned, he made as though it were no sin, but with promises and bribes muffled his face, and covered the vileness of his fact, lest shame should keep him from it; but when he hath done, he made it seem as vile as he could, to make him despair for it. All his baits are made of this fashion, that the sin is done before the punishment be considered. Let us not look for Judas to come out of hell to warn us, for this is written for our learning; and, therefore, 'be as wise as serpents,' that the serpent may not deceive you.

# THE PETITION OF MOSES TO GOD.

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*And I besought the Lord the same time, saying, O Lord God, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness and thy mighty hand: for where is there a God in heaven or in earth that can do like thy works, and like thy power?*—DEUT. III. 23, 24, &c.

HERE Moses teacheth us how to pray. He beginneth first and telleth God that he hath begun to shew him favour; and well might Moses so say, for he was no sooner born but the Lord began to shew him his greatness, in saving him when he was cast into the river, and delivering him unto a king's daughter to be brought up; and after, by his mighty providence, bringing him to his mother to be nursed, Exod. ii. 5, &c. If all that the Lord had done for him till this time be considered, he had great cause to say, 'O Lord, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness.' Herein Moses in some part sheweth himself thankful for that he had received, trusting thereby to entreat God to continue his benefits and loving-kindness towards him, which is a thing which pleaseth God. For which of us having a friend at whose hands we have received a benefit heretofore, if we should stand in need of him again, would not say unto him, Sir, you have been my friend heretofore, and many ways done good unto me; the consideration whereof at this time hath emboldened me to come unto you again. Who is it but will account this a thankful fellow, and say, See, it is a good deed to do for one which shews himself so thankful? Even so Moses cometh to God. He is not like one who sitteth in his door, and seeth one day by day come by him and salute him, and yet taketh no acquaintance, so that if he stand in need of him, either he knoweth not where he dwelleth; or else, because he is not acquainted

with him, he is abashed to ask anything of him. Moses is not such an one, but he is acquainted with the Lord, who so often passed by him; and, therefore, he now saith, 'Thou hast begun, O Lord, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness and thy mighty hand.' Of this is already spoken; what this greatness and mighty hand which God sheweth to Moses was, we have already heard, namely, that mighty deliverance which the Lord, even from his birth to this time, had sent him in the time of need.

*For where is there a God in heaven or in earth that can do like thy works, or like thy power?*

Here Moses challengeth all the idol gods, and telleth them, that amongst them all there is not one of them that can do like his God. So God, when he is opposed and set against his enemies, is then most glorious, and confoundeth them all, Ps. lxxxix. 6.

Now, Moses proceedeth in his prayer, saying, 'I pray thee, let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain of Lebanon. But the Lord was angry with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the Lord said unto me, Let it suffice thee, or be content; speak no more unto me of this matter. Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up,' &c.

Here are four things to be considered: first, the prayer of Moses, in these words, 'I pray thee,' &c.; then the answer of God to his prayer; then the mitigating of his anger, set down in these words, 'Let it suffice,' or 'be content; speak no more unto me of this matter;' then the promise which God maketh unto Moses, that he should see the land of Canaan, though not possess it.

First, for the prayer of Moses, set down in these words, 'I pray thee, let me go over and see the good land,' &c.

Here Moses prayeth like one of us, who are always craving, but never hath respect to the will of God, to say, 'Thy will be done.' Christ hath not taught us to ask our daily bread, before he taught us to say, 'Thy will be done;' and therefore Christ when he went to pray, after he had prayed that 'if it were possible that hour might pass from him'; yet afterward, remembering how he had taught his disciples before, returned again, and said, 'Nevertheless, not that I will, but that thou wilt, be done,' Mark xiv. 35, 36. And our prayer made after this sort is the cause many times why we are not heard; therefore let us hereafter learn in our prayers to pray that God's will may be done.

What is this mountain Lebanon? Surely Moses meaneth the place where the temple should be built, and God honoured; for after that Joshua had quietly possessed the land of Canaan, he

only builded a tabernacle, Joshua xviii. 1, wherein to call upon the Lord.[1]

Now it followeth in the text, 'But the Lord was angry with me for your sakes, and would not hear me,' &c.

So soon as Moses changed his prayer, God turneth from him, and will not hear him; so soon we make God to forsake us, if we do not according to his will. Moses sheweth the cause why God would not hear him; although he were a great man, and in high authority, yet he is not ashamed to confess his fault, which he might have kept secret if he would, for the people knew not that he had sinned, because the sin which he committed was not open, but secret; yea, it was but a little repining, as Numbers xi. 11, &c, and therefore Moses might have kept it from them; but because he would not justify himself, he telleth them that the Lord was angry with him; and because he would not have the people to justify themselves, he telleth them it is 'for their sakes.' Thus when Moses changeth his prayer, God will no longer hear him. So we see that where sin is, there prayer is not effectual; so that if we will hope to receive by prayer anything at God's hands, we must first remove and take away the cause of our hindrance, which is sin, before we can receive the thing we pray for. For here we see that prayer, which before pacified the wrath of God, which healed Miriam being stricken with leprosy, Num. xii. 14; which raised the widow's son from death to life, 1 Kings xvii. 21, 22; by which David obtained victory, which brought down fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice of Elijah, 1 Kings xviii.; which brought Jeremiah out of prison, and Jonah out of the fish's belly, Jonah ii.; and made the sun to stand still, Joshua x.; and the rain to fall from heaven, 1 Kings xviii.; and triumphed over all; is here by a little sin quite overthrown, even like a great monarch poisoned with a little spider.

*But the Lord was angry with me for your sake, and would not hear me.* God, when Moses had prayed, did not grant his request, but was angry with him; but lest Moses should he quite discouraged, he straightways mitigated his anger, and biddeth him be content, and speak no more unto him of that matter. God doth not bid him that he should not pray any more unto him, but that he should pray no more for that thing. First, God biddeth him to be

[1] In two old editions, and in Fuller's edition of 1657, the reading is, 'wherein to call upon the Lord, not perfect;' and in the reprint of Fuller's edition of 1675 it is, 'wherein to call upon the Lord. . . .' the editor having evidently conjectured that the words 'not perfect' were a marginal note, intimating the author's intention to carry out further the statement contained in the paragraph.—Ed.

content; as if he should have said, Although thou mayest not enter into the land, yet I will content thee otherways. Thus God would have us, in what estate soever we be, to be content with our calling, for it is his appointment. And seeing he hath enough to content us all, therefore we should not murmur nor grudge one at another, but be thankful unto him, because it is his good will and pleasure it should be so. And surely Moses would, and was willing that the Jews should, profit by his doctrine, for he hath set it down in the 20th of Numbers twice, and in the xxvii. 13, in Deut. xxxii. 49, and in this place, all to the intent to shew that God is able to content all. He is not like to Isaac, who, when he had blessed one of his sons, could not bless the other, Gen. xxvii. 33; but he, when he had blessed the poor, blessed the hungry; and when he had blessed the hungry, he blessed them that wept; when he had blessed them that wept, he blessed them that were reviled and suffered for Christ's sake. There is no end of blessing, 'because his mercy endureth for ever,' Ps. cxxxvi. God is so merciful, that though we are not able to pray aright, yet he considereth our prayers, and turneth all to the best for our good; not granting our requests many times, but a better thing than we do desire of him. As when David prayed that the child gotten in adultery might live, God heard him, and did consider of it, yet did not grant his request, but a better thing; that was, that his son Solomon should reign after him. And when our Saviour Christ prayed that that hour might pass over him, God heard him, and did consider it, yet did not grant his request, but a better thing, that his death should take away the sins of the world. And here, in this place, where Moses prayeth, God heareth his prayer, and doth consider of it, yet doth not grant his request, but a better thing; that is, that he shall go into the heavenly Canaan. Thus we see that God is so merciful, that he can scarce punish sinners; he is so loving, that often he giveth us better things than we can desire. Who, then, will offend so merciful and loving a Father? Let us, seeing God is so merciful unto us, take heed that we abuse not his mercies, lest in so doing we provoke him unto judgment.

Now God hath told Moses that he shall not go into the land, he beginneth to teach him how he shall do to see it, and biddeth him go up into the top of Pisgah, and cast his eyes eastward, and westward, and northward, and southward, and behold it, &c.

As a bird stayed with a little string, or a strong man in swimming held back by a small twig, so a little sin stayeth this great captain, that he cannot come within the land of Canaan. First, God is

angry with him, and envies him altogether, as though he were not worthy so much as to go up to the mount. Thus we may see how one of the least sins is able to turn from us all the goodness and all the favour which God beareth to us. After, God commands Moses to go up to the mount. Here Moses obeyeth God's commandment; but if he had been like many a murmuring man, he would have denied to go up to the mount, saying, What banquet is this to me, but a dainty dish set before one forbidden to eat? But Moses had rather die than anger the Lord again, when he had bid him be content. This we may learn of Moses, to be content with our calling, whether we have little or much; for God contented Moses as well with the sight of Canaan as those who possessed it. So when God hath not ordained us to see great substance, as he hath some of our brethren, yet because we should not be discontent, he will give us as much pleasure at the sight of them in others as though we ourselves enjoyed them. So God contenteth Moses, and he contenteth Joshua; for as Joshua came into the land as Moses could not, so Moses saw it as Joshua could not. So, I say, God contenteth all, that Joshua should not envy Moses, nor Moses envy Joshua. And this was the great power of God, that although Moses were very old, yet was his eye-sight most perfect, insomuch that he could see farther than any of his company; for being upon the mount, he saw 'all the land of Gilead unto Dan, and all Naphthali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the uttermost sea,' &c., Deut. xxxiv. 1–3. The like to this did never any see being of the age of Moses, who was one hundred and twenty years old. Many things might Moses have objected which might have hindered him from going up the mount; for surely it must needs be a grief to him, when he considered that great pain which he had taken in bringing them through the wilderness, and conducting them forty years together; and now, when he had no farther to go, but even over Jordan, to be taken away then; and another, which never took any pains, possess all his labours: this, I say, must be a great and intolerable thing to flesh and blood; for when one hath laid a foundation, and another comes and builds upon it, surely he will think himself hardly dealt withal. Or if one have drawn a picture, head and face, and all saving the legs, if one come and draw the legs, and so take his labours, he would hardly take it well. You know how they which were hired, and wrought all the day long, because they had not more than those which began the last hour, murmured against the master of the house, Mat. xx. 11. Such is our nature; and yet, notwithstanding

all this, Moses is content. He knoweth that God doth him no wrong, but is just and merciful also. He blesseth all alike, as Jacob's children were blessed, Gen. xlix.

Moses, so long as he was upon the plain ground, could not see the type of heaven; but when he was upon the mount, he saw it before he came to heaven itself. So let us even now scale the mount as Moses did, that we may see and consider these joys; which thing shall serve to reclaim our hearts from earthly matters. As Peter went up the mount to see Christ's glory, and Moses went up the mount to see the land of promise, so let us ascend from these earthly things to the contemplation of heavenly. This should be our journey, till we come up to heaven itself, to climb the hill; for we are low men of stature, like Zaccheus, who cannot see Christ before we be lifted from the earth; so that if we will ever possess heaven, we must pluck our hearts from the earth, and then shall we see God nearer than we can possibly, if we keep our mind upon earthly matters. God sheweth himself to some nearer, to some farther off, and to some in parables; as the prophets saw God nearer than the patriarchs, and the apostles nearer than the prophets. As to Abraham, he said, 'In thy seed,' &c., Gen. xii.; Isaiah came nearer, and said, 'Unto us a child is born,' &c., Isa. ix. 6; John yet came more near, and said, 'Behold the Lamb of God,' John i. 36.

*Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes; for thou shalt not go over this Jordan.*

Now Moses is in his prospect, as David was in his tower. Here he must prepare himself to die, while he is looking upon the land which so long he hath been in coming to. Who would not have grieved at this, that, after so long as forty years travel in hope to possess it, he should now in the end be content with a sight of it, and so vanish away! Yet Moses, for all this, murmureth not, but, like Job, taketh it patiently. And as he was upon the mount where God vanished, so here he is upon the mount and vanisheth away himself; as it appeareth, Deut. xxxiv. 6, 'No man knoweth his tomb,' nor which way he is gone, lest the Jews should have worshipped his relics, as the papists do theirs. So good rulers are taken away in a time when death is least suspected. As Lot was taken away before the people of Sodom knew, as is shewed Gen. xix. 10; so we see that when our time is come, and our glass run out, that neither our riches, nor our wits, nor our friends, nor any-

thing that we have in this world, can carry us any farther. No, no more than Moses could go over this Jordan.

*But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and embolden him, for he shall go before this people, and he shall divide for inheritance unto them the land which thou shalt see.*

Now Moses fainteth, here cometh Joshua, a figure of Christ, who leadeth the people into Canaan, as Christ doth lead them into heaven. Moses is no sooner dead, but God chooseth another captain to go in and out before his people, Num. xxvii. And now God chooseth a governor, see what a man he chooseth. Oh would that God might have the choosing still! for then all governors should be such as Joshua; for such is our corruption, that if we choose ourselves, we still choose such as God would not have chosen; and therefore we had need to pray to the Lord God, as Moses did, that he would 'appoint a man which may go in and out before us, that we be not as sheep without a shepherd,' Num. xxvii. 16.

*But charge Joshua, encourage him, and embolden him.* God would not have Moses to encourage Joshua in words only, but in deeds too; and therefore Moses giveth him all the glory he can, as John gave it unto Christ.

*Charge Joshua, encourage him, and embolden him.* Here God would have Joshua encouraged with all the encouragement that may be, as though he could never be encouraged enough. He had encouraged him before, as in the 21st verse, 'And I charged Joshua the same time,' &c. And in the 27th of Numbers, 'Moses setteth him before Eleazar the priest, and he put his hand upon him, and gave him a charge,' &c. And in Deut. xxxi. 23, God bids him, 'Be strong, and of a good courage.' And in Joshua i. 5, God tells him that 'there shall not be a man able to withstand him all the days of his life, for he will be with him, and never leave him nor forsake him.' And again in the ninth verse he saith, 'Have not I commanded thee not to fear? for I will be with thee whithersoever thou goest.' And in the 31st of Deut. ver. 7, when Moses prepared himself to die, he called Joshua, and bids him 'Be strong, and of a good courage.' And in the eighth of Joshua, verse 1, the Lord biddeth him 'not to fear' when his enemies came upon him. Thus is Joshua encouraged of all; and thus should Joshua be encouraged still. But who encourageth Joshua so? Nay, where is that he that doth not discourage Joshua? Now Joshua is contemned and scorned of the vilest. And is this to encourage him? No; Joshua had need of better encouragement than this, else Joshua, and all the Joshuas in this land, will faint; and so shall the people be left

without a guide to go in and out before them, and then shall they be ready and a fit prey for the wolf. Well, we see that Joshua here is better encouraged, and it is not without a cause that God would have Joshua thus encouraged; for if he had an ear at every man's mouth, he would rather wish to die with Moses upon the mount, than take in hand to bring such wicked Cains into the land of Canaan. That which old Jethro taught Moses, that a governor had need to be a man of courage, here he findeth true; for nothing more hurteth justice than fear. Therefore a magistrate had need to be such a one as shall not fear the face of any whatsoever, which caused Moses to speak so often to Joshua, bidding him to be of good courage. And to that end God commandeth Moses again and again to encourage him, using these three words, *charge, encourage,* and *embolden* him; as the cock crowed thrice, that if Peter were asleep the first and the second time, yet he might at last awake him.

Now it resteth that I should encourage Joshua, which succeedeth me. But how shall I begin to encourage him? or where should I begin? Shall I tell him that he shall live now at ease and in security? No. How shall I encourage Joshua? Shall I tell him you will love him, and follow him, and that he shall find you willing and forward in every good action? If I promise it, shall I not lie? If I become bounden for you, shall I not forfeit? I fear yes. Why, how then should I encourage Joshua? Shall I tell him all will speak well of him? or shall I tell him none will slander him? No. For if he be as righteous as Christ, yet some of the scribes and pharisees will seek to persecute him. If he will live in quietness, he must not utter all the counsel of God, though God command him. Nor must he reprove some sins, for then he shall be thought to bear envy against some persons. Nor must he keep company with the godly, for then he shall be accounted a partaker. Nor must he deny the company of the wicked, for then he shall be accounted a precisian, a puritan, and I know not what. But thou wilt say, What then? is there no comfort for Joshua? I answer, Yes; and that is, it may be after some three or four years' labour and travail he shall win some two or three unto Christ, which shall extinguish all grief; for God will one day reward him for his labour, and glorify him in heaven. But if Joshua should be in trouble, as he cannot almost otherwise choose, if he keep a good conscience, and reprove the mighty under his charge, then he shall see most of the great ones will quite forsake him, which now seem to favour him; and they will see him persecuted like Christ, and stand afar off like

Pilate, and wash their hands, as though they were innocent, when it is in their power and authority to amend it.

If he stand out like a valiant soldier and prevail, then all will draw unto him; but if he faint for lack of strength, although he weep like Peter, yet none will pity him. Therefore stand you to him both in prosperity and adversity. Love him and obey him in all righteousness, as the Jews did their Joshua; and here I deliver you unto him, and with my love, leave, and good will, I give him my possession, my labour, and my twelve months' travails. And here, because I would not keep you over long, like as Joshua kept the people before his death, with an exhortation to fear God, or as one friend holdeth another by the hand being loath to part, I will make an end, beseeching you, as Joshua besought the people of Israel, that you will henceforward fear the Lord, and serve him in truth, and put away all envy and ungodliness, that it may not be said, they have 'returned with the dog to his vomit, or with the swine to the puddle;' but that you may go on forward in all goodness, serving the Lord in spirit and in truth. Then shall the God of heaven bless and prosper you in all temporal graces, and in the end glorify you in the kingdom of heaven. To the which the Lord for his mercy's sake bring you all! Amen.

[This was the last sermon that Henry Smith made at St Clement Danes.]

# THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PAUL AND KING AGRIPPA.

# THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PAUL AND KING AGRIPPA.

*O King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian. Then Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.*—Acts XXVI. 27–29.

In this dialogue between Agrippa the king, and Paul the apostle, first, you shall hear what Paul saith; then you shall hear what Agrippa answers; after, you shall hear what Paul replies. In Agrippa, you shall hear what we are; in Paul, you shall see what we should be; for the king shews that he is *almost* a Christian, and the apostle shews that he should be *altogether* a Christian. This is the sum of their discourse: First, Paul begins and speaks, as though he would teach us a way to win sinners; every word is a motive, and shews that he that fisheth for souls had need to have many nets, and observe time, and place, and calling, and fit all words before in his mind, lest he lose his bait. For unless he seek the vantage, and get the upper ground of sin, before he encounter, it is liker to give him the foil, as the devils did to the exorcists, Acts xix. 16, than to be driven out by him. Therefore, as Jacob came to Esau with seven courtesies, Gen. xxxiii. 3, to prepare his heart, and turn his wrath, before they met together; so Paul useth, as it were, three preambles before he embraceth this king.

First, with a reverent title, *O King Agrippa.* Secondly, with a profitable question, *Dost thou believe the prophets?* Thirdly, with

a favourable prevention, *I know that thou believest.* With these three congees he closes so with king Agrippa, that he could not start out of his circle. The Holy Spirit so placed every word when he meant to do good, that it was not possible to correct them, so they hit in their speeches which have that prompter, and seek not themselves, but would fain speak that which might touch the heart, and win the hearer to God.

*O King Agrippa,* &c. I note here a question and an objection, as though he were opponent and respondent too; for he asks the question, and answers himself. 'O king, dost thou believe?' Now Agrippa should say, *Yea* or *No,* and Paul takes the word out of his mouth; lest he should say, *No,* he answers for him, 'I know thou believest.' This is his preparative to Agrippa, before he come with that hard lesson to be a Christian altogether. Before, Paul had to deal with Festus, the president of Cæsarea, which came now from the idolatrous Gentiles, an obstinate, brutish and barbarous man; which, because he savoured not the things of God, but flesh and blood, thought that Paul was 'beside himself' when he spake of Christ, and said, that 'too much learning had made him mad;' as some giddy spirits think now, that they which are zealouser than themselves know not what they say or do, and impute all the troubles of the realm, and the invasion of the Spaniards, unto the preaching of the word, and to the fasts and prayers that were exercised about that time; like Ahab, which said that the prophet troubled Israel, when he himself was the cause of all their plagues. What will not dogs spue out when they are set to vomit? When Paul saw such a brutish president, he turned his speech from him to Agrippa, in whom he did see better tokens of faith. Thinking to kindle the sparks which he saw in him, thus boldly he sets upon him, 'O King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?' As if he should say, If thou believest the prophets, it is easy for thee to believe that which I teach out of the prophets; for all that I speak of this Jesus is written in the prophets, and fulfilled in Christ. Look upon the prophets, and look upon him, there thou shalt see all that I say; that it is no report of mine, but that which I have received from good witnesses, and thou mayest hear it of the same, if thou do but read the prophets. Therefore, before other questions, he asks, 'Dost thou believe the prophets?' Like a wise schoolmaster, which examines his scholar before he begins to teach him, to know what he hath learned already, and how he understandeth, that he may go forward with him, so Paul examines this king, when he intended to make him a scholar of Christ; he asked him what he hath

learned already, before he teaches him farther; and posing him, he begins at the foundation, which is faith, saying, Tell me, dost thou believe the prophets? Yet if we should ask some of you, before ye come to the Lord's table, Do ye believe the Scriptures? Do ye know Christ? Can ye give a reason of your faith? you will think yourselves much disgraced to be catechised as this king was. We must not ask you with Paul, Do you believe? but say with Paul, 'We know that ye believe,' before we ask you. Is this like the child which Christ set in the midst of his disciples, and said, that 'Whosoever received the kingdom of heaven, he should receive it as a child;' that is, he should humble himself, and take correction, and learn like a child; for heaven's gate is low, and he must stoop that goes in at it? The soldiers, and publicans, and harlots, had such remorse, that they came to John before they were baptized, 'confessing their sins, and asked, Master, what shall we do?' They were not ashamed to acknowledge both their sins and their ignorance, which made John wonder, and ask who had taught them, as though this should be a strange thing in time to come, and so it is. If ye be not like publicans, when will ye be like Christians? They confessed before they were baptized, but we must think that you know, though you know that we think wrong; we must take you for religious, though you know we take you amiss. Shame of face was ordained for sin, but shame is turned from sin to righteousness; for they which are ashamed of no evil, are ashamed of any good. This is a bashful devil.

Now, when Paul had asked him, he answered himself, 'Dost thou believe? I know thou believest.' He asked Agrippa whether he believed, and saith, he knoweth that he doth believe. What need he ask that which he knows?

Here you may see that we have need to suspect our judgment, when we conceive not the cause why they which are wiser and holier than ourselves do thus or thus, speak thus or thus. Let us remember that the spiritual man judgeth all, and is judged of none, because no man knoweth the counsels of the Spirit but he which hath it. Wise men have large exceptions, and it becomes us to construe their sayings and doings better than others shall construe ours. As the disciples reverenced many sayings of Christ, when they knew not his meaning, so we should rather think that we know not the reason, than that they speak without reason. Christ did know that Peter loved him; yet that he might get a confession of him, and instruct him farther, he did ask him that which he knew; so Paul catechising Agrippa, doth ask him that

which he knew, to teach him that which he knew not. But why doth Paul say flatly, that he knows that which no man thought of this king before? Either because that he did perceive that Agrippa did believe in part, and therefore he rejoiced like the father to see the son coming towards him; so he meets him in the way, and embraceth him as it were with this commendation, 'I know that thou believest;' that is, I know thou hast a kind of faith, and believest that the prophets said truly, as many of the Gentiles did, though thou canst not apply it unto thyself: so to bring him from faith to faith, from knowledge to knowledge, from love to love, he commends those sparks in him which deserved not to be called faith, but almost faith, as Agrippa saith. Or else he saith, 'I know thou believest,' because he would have him believe. Therefore he prevents him, and answers for him, lest Agrippa should go back, and mislike with his boldness, and say, No, I believe not the prophets; as it is like he would have said, if Paul had not spoken mildly to him; therefore he begs the question, and answers him, 'I know thou believest.' As when we will make a man our friend, and willing to do us a pleasure, we speak as though he were willing already, and that we made no doubt of him. Dost thou believe? Yea, I know thou believest. And yet it was but *almost believe*, as Agrippa confessed himself. But if he had not believed, this was the way to make him believe; for this makes many zealous, to be counted zealous; and many studious, valiant, and bountiful, to have a name of more than is in them. As, if ye mark, ye shall see generally, to speak well of a man, rather than evil, doth stir him to virtue, and encourage him in the virtue; for no man is so humble but he leans to fame; and a good report doth tickle and please him which deserves it, and him which deserves it not. Therefore Paul, which knew by long experience what bait was best to catch fowls, when he cast forth such a strange question, anticipates the answer, lest Agrippa should answer otherwise than he would have him; he will not trust him with such a question, but speaks for him, 'I know that thou believest.' Solomon saith that 'he is wise who winneth souls,' Prov. xi. 30. And so you may see in this example: here zeal and discretion were met together; the dove's simplicity and the serpent's policy kiss each other, to win one soul to God. What study Paul took, and how he beat his brains, and picked his words, to win a king to religion! because many turn with their head. He doth not so much flatter Agrippa, as he persuades him to do that which he saith he doth. That was Paul's drift, to draw him, as it were, with the cords of joy, and

make him confess Christ before he was aware, that so he might get more and more of him; even as Nathan made David by a sleight to confess against himself, and repent his adultery, whenas it is like that plain and blunt speeches would have done more hurt than good. This is the subtlety of wisdom, as I term it, which Solomon intendeth, when she saith, 'I wisdom dwell with prudence,' Prov. viii. 12, where *prudence* signifieth Christian policy, which Christ commends when he saith, 'Be wise like serpents,' Mat. x. 16. This you have as a pattern before you; they which convert souls to God may see how Paul encounters with Agrippa; whereby no doubt the Holy Ghost would have us learn how to gratulate our brethren in their small beginnings, and praise the mite which comes from them that have learned but a while, and take hold of such as are coming forward, and draw them farther with all the signs of love, and not disdain those which come at the last hour to the vineyard, though we ourselves have laboured since the morning. For 'he which is first may be last; and he which seemed last may be first.' Therefore let no man insult beyond the lists of humility; as many make themselves unprofitable servants, by counting themselves more profitable than others. It is a fault among the best, which are like Aaron and Miriam, a little proud of the Spirit, and contemn them which are so ignorant as Agrippa, whom Paul bears in his arms, like the lost sheep to the fold again.

Now Paul had spoken, Agrippa answers, 'Almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian;' wherein ye may see how Paul's speech wrought with him, that he was almost converted with a word, when it was spoken in wisdom and love; so what power is in one sermon if ye hear attentively. Agrippa was an heathen even now, and worshipped idols, and never heard a preacher before; yet one sermon made him 'almost a Christian.' As Luke saith of Stephen when he disputed against the Cyrenians, Acts vi. 10, 'They could not resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake,' so Agrippa could not resist the wisdom and the spirit by which Paul spake, but was so fettered with the holy chain, that as Paul was captive to Festus, so Agrippa was captive to Paul. The word had him in bands like a prisoner, and made him confess against himself before Festus that he was 'almost a Christian.' For Paul's speech was to the amaze of that obstinate president, and wonder of all that stood by, to see a king, an heathen and an idolater, which sat to judge, to be so changed with a word of a captive from his opinion, whom they thought all the words in God's book could not alter if Paul and Christ had spoken to him all his life. Then it was verified which

before was prophesied, 'They shall bind kings in chains, and nobles in fetters of iron,' Ps. cxlix. 8. Oh, the majesty and force of the word! When faith doth kindle it, and zeal doth utter it, it flies like the stone out of David's sling, and strikes sin and sinners both together at the heart.

This Paul did in bonds: when he was bound, he was stronger than they that bound him; when he was a captive, he was freer than they which kept him; and when his judges examined him, he examined them, and made them free which were bound to Satan before he was free from them. Send for Paul out of prison to instruct Agrippa, and he is in bonds which should convert. Oh, that such doctors might preach unto the Romish princes of Europe! Oh, that the kings that honour yet the most antichristian beast would hear like this king! But they have some Amaziahs, which have an eye to Amos that he cannot speak in the court: 'Go, thou seer, fly into the land of Judea, prophesy to the lambs, and keep sheep. Speak no more at Bethel; for this is the king's chapel, and the king's court,' Amos vii. 12, 13; a goodly reason why none but flatterers should preach to princes, 'because it is the king's court.' Should not kings hear the truth as well as others? Must not Bethel hear of salvation as well as Judah, because Amaziah doth fear his fall, lest Amos get his honour from him? When will he convert Agrippa, which will not preach in bonds nor in liberty? Happy Agrippa, not by the name of a king, but by the name of a Christian. Happy Agrippa, not by the presents which thou receivedst of Festus, but by the words which thou heardest of Paul. Thou camest to see, but God brought thee to hear. Thy intent was to gratulate Festus, but now thou mayest gratulate Paul. The captive was better to thee than the president; for Festus hath shewed thee but his pomp, but Paul hath shewed thee his Saviour, and persuaded thee to become a Christian.

*Almost*, saith Agrippa, but not *altogether*. Here you may see your pittance, how you measure God with *almost*, and serve him by halves, which hath given all; like Ananias, which brought a part, and kept a part behind.

This is our worship of God, though we will not say for shame with Agrippa, that we are but almost Christians; yet we are not *almost* when we would be counted *altogether*. We go before him in hypocrisy, and come behind him in modesty; for Agrippa would not shew more than he had to be counted better than he was. Though *altogether* had been as ready as *almost*, as it is to us, yet when *almost* was all, he said *almost*, not *altogether*. It seems that the flax began to smoke, though it did not burn. The first temper is

cold, the next is lukewarm, the last is hot. *Almost* is first, and *altogether* is last, and many come between before we can go from one to another. Agrippa confesseth that *almost* is all; and here he stays to hear what Paul will say to instruct him further: 'Paul, thou hast persuaded me almost to become a Christian.' It is like the faint confession of him that wept, and said, 'I believe, Lord, help my unbelief:' I am a Christian, teach me to be a Christian. Therefore, they which descant upon his name do note that *Agrippa* is as much as *Ægre pario*, which signifies him which hardly laboureth, and brings forth with pain, as Agrippa did. '*Nabal* is his name,' saith Abigail, 'and folly is with him;' so *Agrippa* is his name, and difficulty is with him; for hard and scarce was his conception: instead of a Christian, he brought forth 'almost a Christian.'

Shall we now behold our face in Agrippa's glass, whether we be *altogether*, like Paul, or *almost*, like Agrippa, or like Festus, *not at all?* Christians or no Christians, or what kind of Christians are we? There be many degrees upon earth, but this is the highest degree; there be many names of honour, but this is the honourablest name; there be many professions of men, but this is the best profession, to be a Christian; that is, the son of God, the fellow of angels, the heir of heaven. Yet whether we should be Christians, or Christians almost, or Christians altogether, is a question which troubleth every man, and when *altogether* is approved for best, yet we choose *almost* before it.

There is something always behind, like the eye which looked to Sodom. As an owl peeps at the sun out of a barn, but dares not come to it, so we peep at religion, and will not come near it, but stand aloof off, pinking and winking, as though we were more afraid of God than the devil. For self-love, and regard of persons, and fear of laws, and sway of time, more are afraid to be too holy than to be profane, because holiness is worse entreated than profaneness.

Go away and sin no more, because thou art healed. Nay, go away and sin again, because thou art healed! As Naaman entreated for one sin, that he might stand before the idol when his lord leaned upon his shoulder; so this sin and that sin will not let let us pass the compass of *almost*, lest we should have a perfect reward. God would have nothing so perfect as a Christian, for whom he hath given his well-beloved Son, his Spirit, his law, and his prophets, 'that the man of God may be perfect,' as Paul saith. Yet everything grows till it be perfect. The builder builds till it be an house; the tailor seweth till it be a garment; the painter

paints till it be a picture; only the Christian leaves off before he attain to be a Christian, and makes a full period at *almost*.

That which God would have to be perfectest of all, men had rather have imperfect than perfect, half than all; a little wealth, a little rest, a little honour, and a little pleasure, seems nothing; but a little faith is enough, although it be never so small a mite. We have a weight for all kind of metals, a touchstone for gold, a measure for grain, and we will not take one jot less than measure of any man; only we cut God of his weight and measure, and weigh our service in half balances. This I will do, and this I will not do. God shall have one part, and the world shall have another part, and the flesh shall have another part, and the devil shall have another part. Thus we have brought God to his stint: ask while he will, he shall have no more but *almost;* almost zealous, almost faithful, almost righteous; as though *almost* were better than *altogether;* that is, the counterfeit than the truth, the shadow than the body. Paul saith, that the Athenians were too religious in worshipping an idol, Acts xvii. 22. But where doth Paul find that excess in worshipping God? We are not too diligent, but too negligent where we should be diligent. James, speaking of our sins, calls them 'the superfluity of our maliciousness;' whereby he sheweth, that though our wickedness be a superfluous and vain thing, yet it overfloweth, and exceedeth the banks. But Christ, speaking of his disciples' progress in righteousness, calls them all by this name, 'O ye of little faith,' &c. So he may say, of little love, of little zeal, &c. For all our virtues are little ones, and the waters of life are at such an ebb, that the least temptation may wade over them and not be drowned. God hath a controversy with us, as he had with Israel, Hosea iv. 1, and this is it. We were born when wisdom cried in the streets, and yet she may call us fools, and say, 'How long wilt thou hate knowledge?' Prov. i. 22. For 'What could God do more unto his vineyard, that he hath not done?' Thirty years we have been dressing, and pruning, and watering; and yet what is in Jerusalem more than in Samaria? in the vineyard, than in the mountains, which were never tilled nor dressed? How long shall he dress a barren fig-tree, which is dead at the root? Our church is in a consumption, her heads are sick, her members weak, her physicians fearful; from little to little our zeal is come to the last gasp, ready to take her leave of all, because she sees not that we love religion, but chase it from us. Her enemies are placed above her; she grows amongst thorns; she is fed with checks; she mourneth in a corner; she speaks in a reed. Her gar-

ments are clipped; her friends dare not defend her from her enemies. What shall I say? We had rather be whole sinners than half Christians. White is counted no colour; so zeal is counted no virtue. But mere hypocrisy is counted true Christianity; and true Christianity is counted but hypocrisy. Our wealth is in an *ephah*, our zeal is in an *omer;* our sin like an oak, our faith like a mustard-seed. They which have no religion are counted honest men; for they count it as easy a matter to be a Christian, as to say the Lord's prayer, the apostles' creed, the ten commandments, and to go to the church. This is country divinity, this is city divinity, and, I may say, St Clement's divinity. He which can swear that the pope is antichrist, and that flesh is good on Fridays, is a protestant, at least a Christian every inch; he hath zeal, knowledge, and religion in folio! This is the rampire in our days, like a lion in the passages; *almost* standeth in the way before we can come to *altogether;* and they which will go beyond *almost* are counted curious, factious, precise, fantastical; as though *almost* were more than *altogether*, and *altogether* were not so much as *almost*. 'If his righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees,' which is but hypocrisy, he shall be punished for his righteousness, as if it were a fault; as Cain persecuted Abel, because his sacrifice was better than his.

Our Saviour saith, 'Learn of me to be humble,' and zealous, and righteous; but now we must learn of others, and set a crooked pattern before us, lest we go too straight. We may preach like John, as in Mat. iii. 8, 'Bring forth fruits;' but we may not preach like Christ, 'Bring forth much fruit,' John xv. 5. For that is counted an unreasonable service of God. If we give him the seventh day, the seventh part, the tenths or tithes of our lives, and of our thoughts, and of our speeches, and of our works, it is enough; so we define *altogether*, out of measure. Thus we dodge with God, and draw back from our promise which we made in baptism, as though he were not worthy of such a goodly creature, to have that which he gives. Ever since we were born we have served two masters. If one foot stand in the church, the other foot sticketh in the world; if one hand carry fire, the other hand carries water; if one word savour of religion, the next word whatsoever savoureth of pride, or envy, or lust.

How few of our thoughts are consecrated to God! How few of our speeches taste of grace! How few of our works are squared to the word of God, which should be the line and level of all our thoughts, speeches, and actions! Tell thy sins which thou hast committed

since thou didst rise in the morning, and record thy good deeds which thou hast done ever since thou wast born, and the first shall exceed the last. Thou which sayest thou art a Christian, hast rebelled more since thou rosest, than thou hast obeyed since thou wert born.

Is this *altogether* like Paul, or, like Festus, *not at all?* Now if we be *almost Christians*, let us see what it is to be almost a Christian. *Almost* a son, is a bastard; *almost* sweet, is unsavoury; *almost* hot, is lukewarm, which God spueth out of his mouth, Rev. iii. 16; so, *almost* a Christian is not a Christian, but that which God spueth out of his mouth. A Christian almost is like a woman which dieth in travail; almost she brought forth a son, but that *almost* killed the mother and the son too. Almost a Christian is like Jeroboam, which said, 'It is too far to go to Jerusalem to worship,' and therefore chose rather to worship calves at home. Almost a Christian is like Micah, which thought himself religious enough because he had gotten a priest into his house. Almost a Christian is like the Ephraimites, which could not pronounce Shibboleth, but Sibboleth. Almost a Christian is like Ananias, which brought a part, but left a part behind. Almost a Christian is like Eli's sons, which polled the sacrifices; like the fig-tree, which deceived Christ with leaves; like the virgins, which carried lamps without oil; like the willing unwilling son, which said he would come and came not. What is it to be born almost? If the new man be but born almost, he is not born. What is it to be married almost unto Christ? He which is married but almost, is not married. What is it to offer sacrifice almost? The sacrifice must be killed ere ever it can be sacrificed. He which gives almost, gives not, but denieth. He which believeth almost, believeth not, but doubteth. Can the door which is but almost shut keep out the thief? Can the cup which is but almost whole hold any wine? Can the ship which is but almost sound keep out water? The soldier which doth but almost fight, is a coward. The physician which doth but almost cure, is but a slubberer. The servant which doth but almost labour, is a loiterer. I cannot tell what to make of these defectives, nor where to place them, nor how to call them, nor unto what to liken them. They are like unto children which sit in the market place, where is mourning and piping, and they neither weep nor dance, but keep a note between them both; they weep almost, and dance almost. Believest thou almost? 'Be it unto thee,' saith Christ, 'as thou believest.' Therefore if thou believest, thou shalt be saved; if thou believest almost, thou shalt be saved almost. As when a pardon

comes while the thief hangs upon the gallows, he is almost saved, but the pardon doth him no good; so he which is almost a Christian, almost zealous, almost righteous, which doth almost love, almost believe, shall be almost saved; that is, if he had been a Christian altogether, he should not be damned. Thus every man is a Christian almost, before he be a Christian altogether.

Now I must lead you from *almost* to *altogether;* as it were to Christians from the figure of Christians. This is the step which we must tread at this time. 'I would to God,' saith Paul, 'that thou wert not almost, but altogether, as I am.' When he saw Agrippa coming on, and said *almost,* then Paul cast up his lure again. Comest thou, Agrippa? Come, Agrippa, I will not have thee stay at *almost,* if anything will bring thee to *altogether.* I did not ask thee whether thou didst believe the prophets, that thou mightest be a Christian almost, but a Christian altogether. Art thou come thus far; and stayest thou at *almost?* Nay, Agrippa, thou must take out this lesson, for there is no measure in Christianity. 'Come *unto* me,' saith Christ; not, 'Come *toward* me.' Yet he was glad, like the father, to see his son coming toward him; for it was a sign that he would come to him; he was comforted with *almost*; but he was not satisfied without *altogether.* Is this thy offering, almost? It will not serve, Agrippa; it is light, it is soldered, it is cracked, correct it again; for our Master saith, 'Be ye holy as I am holy;' therefore almost a Christian will not please him. But if thou be almost a Christian already, how easy is it for thee to be a Christian altogether! Therefore come, Agrippa, let us go forward to heaven. The seed is sown to grow. Everything must increase and multiply. *Almost* is thy first answer, and *altogether* thy last. I must not take this for an answer. Shall I tell Christ, that Agrippa is almost a Christian? O Agrippa, God would have thee hot or cold, as it appeareth, Rev. iii. 15. Cold to him is as pleasing as lukewarm; he loveth altogether, and he will not be loved almost. Who shall have the other half, if God have but *almost?* Therefore, speak again, good Agrippa. Thus he pleadeth unkindness with him, like an importunate suitor which will not be answered. Shall I go with almost? Then thou usest me but hardly, if thou wilt give no more. Thus he stands in an argument with him. What shall I say to Agrippa, if he will give me but *almost?* I will pray for thee till thou comest off with all; if I can get no more of Agrippa, I will crave more of God. He which hath made thee almost, can make thee altogether.

*I would to God,* &c. So now he converteth himself to prayer

Thus we must learn to fish for souls with prayers, and entreaties, and questions. Change the bait, cast thy lure again, follow the siege, pursue the blow, close with sin and gather more upon it. At first he will call thee enemy, as Ahab did to Elias, 'Art thou here, mine enemy?' But if thou wilt not bow to him, he will bow unto thee, and hearken what thou sayest, and change his robe, and put on sackcloth, and mourn and fast, and do all that thou wouldst have him. A preacher must not look to find them Christians, but make them Christians. Thou shalt not find them converted, because thou comest to convert them. If Paul will not yield to Agrippa, Agrippa will yield to Paul; but if Paul had fallen to *almost*, he had never brought Agrippa to *altogether*. Therefore, they which fish for souls, must take Paul's net, and remember what God saith to Jeremiah, chap. xv. 19, 'Let them be converted unto thee, but be not thou converted unto them,' for then thou shalt never convert them; signifying that our constancy in goodness shall induce others to turn from their wickedness, and make him which is but *almost* come to *altogether*. This is the substance of Paul's reply, that it is not enough to be a Christian almost; that is, to have a kind of religion, a little knowledge, a little faith, a cold zeal, a flattering holiness, like the touch of the hem; but we must march to perfection, and 'do his will upon earth as it is in heaven,' and contend to be 'holy as he is holy.' 'This is religion,' saith James, 'to keep thyself unspotted,' like a glass which is still wiped. To this end, saith Paul, 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17, 'The Scripture doth teach, and reprove, and instruct, and comfort; that the man of God might be absolute.' And Eph. i. 4, to this end we are elected, 'that we might be holy, and without blame.' And Rom. i. 17, he describes our journey, 'from faith to faith,' not from faith to distrust. As David describes the way of the righteous, Ps. lxxxiv. 7, 'from virtue to virtue,' as a traveller goes from town to town, till he come to his inn. What a foolish thing were it for the scribe to stay there, when our Lord tells him 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of heaven.' For therefore Christ telleth him that he is not far from heaven, to encourage him, lest he should give over before he come to it. So if ye stay at *almost*, and repent in some sort, as Esau did when he wept, you may hunt for the blessing, as Esau did, and go without it; for God is not mocked, but God is mocked if colours and shows will serve.

When God said, 'Seek ye my face; mine heart answered,' said David, 'I will seek thy face,' Ps. xxvii. 8. So we must answer the Lord to that which he asketh, and not, when he bids us seek his

face, seek his back; when he requireth all, give him half. God asks, Art thou a Christian? and thou answerest, O Lord, I am almost a Christian. What niggardly answer is this to him, which deserveth a thousand times more than the best can give? If thy master ask thee, Art thou my servant? wilt thou answer him, I am almost thy servant? If thy prince ask thee, Art thou my subject? wilt thou answer, I am almost thy subject? If thy father ask thee, Art thou my son? wilt thou answer, I am almost thy son? If thou art but almost his son, then he is but almost thy father. And so it is with God, a son or no son; half a son is a bastard. How dost thou know God to be thy God, but as thou art his servant? How dost thou know God to be thy Father, but as thou art his son? By thy love thou shalt know God's love; for according to thy mind towards him is his mind of thee, whereby thou mayest judge whether he favour thee, or hate thee, and no way else.

God loveth nothing almost, therefore he doth not love *almost*. Therefore love as thou mayest be loved, or else thy love is lost; thou must seek as thou mayest find, or else thy labour is lost. 'They shall seek and find me,' saith God, 'because they shall seek with all their hearts,' Jer. xxix. 13; as though they should not find him though they sought him, unless they sought him with all their hearts.

Naaman is not only commanded to wash himself in Jordan, but to wash himself seven times, and then he shall be healed; so, man is not only commanded to obey God, but to obey him while he lives, and then he shall be saved. 'Be faithful,' saith the angel, 'unto death, and then I will give thee the crown of life,' Rev. ii. 10.

When Saul was commanded to kill the idolatrous beasts, he was commanded to kill all; and because he spared some, God rejected him. Yet God hath more mercy on beasts than on sins. Would he have the beasts of sinners die, and their vices live? No, saith Christ, 'Make clean within,' that is, leave no filth behind. Whensoever Christ cast out one devil, we read that he cast out all, even the legion together; so when thou castest out one vice, cast out all, for one is not worthier than another.

The prophet doth teach us to pour out our sins like water, which leaveth no taste, or colour, or scent behind. There is a whole old man, and there must be a whole new man. The old man must change with the new man wisdom for wisdom, love for love, fear for fear; his worldly wisdom for heavenly wisdom, his carnal love for spiritual love, his servile fear for Christian fear, his idle thoughts

for holy thoughts, his vain words for wholesome words, his fleshly works for righteous works. This is a Christian altogether, as if he were cast in a new mould. As if a painter would draw a beautiful picture, which should be fairer than all the women in the world, he would mark the special grace of every one, and make one beauty of all; so we must make up a Christian, and take modesty from him, faith from him, love from him, patience from him, zeal from him, and humility from him, until it be like the image of Christ. This is the building of a Christian. First, his foundation is laid, and then his walls, and then his roof, and then a Christian, like Adam in paradise. God made all things good; therefore if we be but *almost good*, all things are better than we. The wicked man speaketh out of the corruption of his fleshly heart; and shall not the righteous speak out of the abundance of his spiritual heart? He which is merry would be merrier if he knew how; he which is envious would look sterner if he could; he which is proud would go braver if he had it; and all, if we could be worse, we would. But let them amend which look to die. For what kind of man should he be which must bear the image of God, be the temple of the Holy Ghost, and inherit the kingdom of heaven? 'Who is fit for these things?' saith Paul. Nay, who is not unfit for these things? Do you know no *enough* in riches, nor pleasure, nor sin; and think that you have enough of religion, before you have any? The good are known, because none but they which are good strive to be better. We are invited to a banquet, and shall we go but half the way unto it? Were it not better that the fig-tree had borne fruit, than leaves? that the virgins had carried oil, than lamps? So is it not better for us to be vessels of gold that come to the Lord's table, than like the image in Daniel, part of gold, part of silver, part of brass, part of iron, and part of clay, which was after broken? If the crown did lie in the midway, then thou needest run but half the way; but to shew that there is no reward for them that begin well, all the promises are made to him that 'continueth to the end.' Not only he is cursed which doeth evil, but he which doeth the work of the Lord negligently, or by halves, that is, he which offereth a maimed sacrifice for a sound, almost a Christian for altogether. Therefore David, before he prays, summoneth his thoughts, his speeches and actions, and saith, 'All that is within me, praise the Lord;' as a man giveth that which he thinketh will be accepted, that he may be welcome for it. If we did serve an ungrateful master, then we might think *almost* enough. But Christ did not love almost, when he shed his heart's blood for us; and therefore he

cannot ask more than he gave; and yet the inheritance of his blessing is behind; why shouldest not thou give as much for it as Abraham, or David, or Simeon, which would have served God till this time if they had lived, and still reformed themselves, and yet thought they had done nothing; as Jacob counted his service for Rachel nothing, because he loved her. But thou thinkest, if thou givest thy pleasures, thou shalt want thy pleasures. No; as Abraham did not lose his son, when he would have sacrificed his son, so God can keep his pleasures when thou resignest thy pleasures. Thou thinkest that God will not miss it, as Ananias thought that Peter would not miss it; but if Peter did miss it, will not God miss it? So we pare the offering like Eli's sons, which kept the best and fattest to themselves, which made the people abhor the sacrifices; and shall not God abhor such sacrifices? If Eli reproved his sons, how will God reprove them, which reproved Eli for not reproving them enough? A spiritual ear can hear God reproving this land for this mincing of his worship. Can the preaching of the word, the signs of heaven, the shaking of the earth, the victory over your enemies, and all the blessings of God, make you but almost Christians, almost religious, almost thankful? Is this my reward, saith God, as though you were afraid to be too good? If you think that you shall be mocked if you be too zealous, as Michal scorned David when he danced before the ark, 2 Sam. vi., David tells you how you shall stop such scorners' mouths. Oh (saith David) 'I will be more humble yet before my God.' When Michal saw his resolution, she mocked him no more, but reverenced him ever after. So tell the devil and all his mockers, I will be more zealous, more fervent, and more holy yet, until I be like him which said, 'Follow me,' and they which mock thee shall reverence thee, as Michal did David.

Thus when thou art in the way to heaven, remember that thou must go forward or backward; for Jacob did see none *stand* upon the ladder which ascended up to heaven, but either they went up or down; they which go not forward, go backward. They which will not come so forward as *altogether*, shall not stay at *almost*, but fall from their faith, and love, and knowledge, and zeal, by descents, till Christ's threatening be fulfilled, 'That which they seem to have shall be taken from them,' as though they never had any taste at all.

Thus I have set you a glass to behold whether you are in *almost* or *altogether*. Hitherto Paul lured for Agrippa; now he sues to

the people. When he had caught the king, he spread his net for the people. 'I would to God that not only thou, but all that hear me, were not only almost, but altogether, as I am.'

He might wish rather than hope, and therefore he prays, I would to God that all were Christians, as Moses wished that all could prophesy. Peter was taught both to feed the sheep and the lambs, great and small, old and young, rich and poor; so Paul prays for the king and for the people too, and wisheth that they were all Christians. This prayer we may say for them that do not pray for themselves, to make them ashamed, when they see others more careful for their souls than they themselves. The pastor's care extendeth to all; although some are more to be laboured, yet none is to be despised, which is but a lamb of the flock. Paul doth not wish Agrippa more honour, or more wealth, or more friends, but more religion, which is the greatest want of princes. Although they have received a kingdom, yet they are not so thankful as they which have received nothing but from hand to mouth. Though they have done a thousand times more evil, yet they are not so penitent as he which hath done least of all. They sit in God's seat, and are called gods, but are not like God, but like mammon, more than their names and their crowns; except David, or Solomon, or Joshua, a few which remember whose persons they bear; the rest are like Herod, and Saul, and Nebuchadnezzar, which know not from whom their kingdoms come. 'As I am,' saith Paul directly. Paul should have replied, 'altogether a Christian,' and not, 'altogether as I am;' but who shall teach the Spirit to persuade? He chose to say, 'as I am,' that Agrippa might see his single heart and love toward him, who went not about to seduce him, but wished unto him as unto himself, 'Even as I am.' If anything will persuade, most fit is the example, when he which teacheth us goeth before us; for then we see that he dealeth plainly, and speaks of love, and means no deceit, when we see him do as he saith. 'Saul hath slain his thousand, but David his ten thousand;' so where another converts a thousand, he shall convert ten thousand, which can say, like Christ, 'Follow me.' Oh, what is this, when *a Christian* and *I* am all one! that ye might say to your children, I would to God thou wert a Christian, when ye say, I would to God thou wert like me.

The king should be like Paul by this saying: How then do some say with Festus, 'Too much zeal hath made thee mad.' If the people know the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments, and the articles of belief, it is enough! Is this to be like Paul? No, Festus; the knowledge of the word doth not make a man mad, but makes

him wise to salvation. Can that which makes a man wise make a man mad? Therefore they which say that we are the worse for knowledge, or worse for religion, or worse for zeal, are like Festus, which had neither knowledge, zeal, nor religion in him. And they which teach the people that they shall not need to be as Paul, but that a mediocrity will serve, incur that curse of Paul, 'He which teacheth another doctrine than that which ye have received of us,' which wisheth all as perfect as himself, 'let him be anathema,' that is, accursed. They which love you like Paul, do not wish you zeal by weight, and knowledge by ounces, and works by number, a shekel, or an omer, or an ephah; but that ye abound in all knowledge, and all zeal; and let them be lukewarm which will be spued out.

*Except my bands.* Yet Paul excepteth something; not his knowledge, nor his zeal, but his bands; not, 'altogether as I am,' but, 'altogether as I am, except these bands.' He excepteth nothing but his troubles. Charity had rather suffer than others should suffer; as David prayed God to turn his wrath from the Israelites upon him. Now, if you ask me, Who can love his neighbour as himself? Here is one had rather suffer himself than Agrippa should suffer; he would have him partaker in all his good, but not in his troubles; 'as I am, except these bands.' Paul glories in his bands, and shews his chains like his ensigns; these are the marks of Christ; this is the cognizance of my Lord, his sweet yoke and easy burden. But he wisheth faith to them without a burden: 'The battle is to the strong;' and the cross is not to be wished for, but to be borne.

Thus the Spirit of wisdom hath set us an example how men are won to the truth, and led forward by little and little, with lenity and softness, putting difference between them which know not the truth, and them which resist the truth. Paul did not speak so to Elymas the sorcerer, which withstood the truth, Acts xiii. 10, but 'set his eyes upon him, and said, O full of all subtilty and mischief, the child of the devil, and enemy of all righteousness.' Neither did Peter speak so to Simon Magus, Acts viii. 23. But as Solomon saith, 'A wise man knoweth the time and place;' and as Paul saith, 'The spiritual man discerneth all things; so he knoweth when to be soft, and when to be rough. They which resist the truth, as Elymas, and labour to keep the rulers from it, as Elymas did Sergius Paulus the deputy of Cyprus, and many like him now, must not be entreated like Agrippa, which is coming to the truth, but as Elymas was. He which hath Paul's spirit knoweth how to handle both in their kind. Though we may not discover the

nakedness of some, yet we may not hide the nakedness of others. An humble heart is a good schoolmaster, both to apply comfort and reproof. Now, the Lord Jesus, which hath made you Christians *almost,* make you Christians *altogether !*

# THE HUMILITY OF PAUL.

# THE HUMILITY OF PAUL.

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye give up your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable serving of God. And fashion not yourselves like unto this world; but be you changed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is the good will of God, and acceptable, and perfect.*—ROM. XII. 1, 2.

PAUL, an apostle of the Gentiles, writing to the Romans, which were Gentiles, after he had shewed what God had done for them, in receiving them into his covenant which were not of his covenant, and making them his people which were not his people, that the Gentiles might triumph now over the Jews, as much as the Jews triumphed over the Gentiles, because the Jews were rejected and the Gentiles received in their place, Rom. xi. 13; now he sheweth what they should do for God: 'Give your bodies a sacrifice to him.' That is, as Christ gave himself for you, so you must give yourselves to him; as he was sacrificed for you, so you must be sacrificed for him; not your sheep, nor your oxen, nor your goats, but yourselves, you must be the sacrifice. This sacrifice Paul calleth 'a living, and holy, and acceptable sacrifice.' A *living* sacrifice, because the Jews' sacrifices were dead sacrifices; an *holy* sacrifice, because they might sacrifice beasts, and not be holy, but they cannot sacrifice themselves, but they must needs be holy; an *acceptable* sacrifice, because the sacrifices of beasts did not please God, unless they did sacrifice themselves too, but if they sacrifice themselves, it doth please God, though they do not sacrifice beasts. It is true, that God did require this sacrifice of the Jews as well as of the Gentiles, for in Deut. x. 16, he saith, 'Circumcise your heart;' and 1 Sam xv. 22, he saith, 'Obedience is better than sac-

rifice;' which shews, that even then God did require the sacrifice of the body more than of beasts. But although God did require this of the Jews also, that they should sacrifice their bodies too, yet Paul signifies that God requireth larger of the Gentiles, because, as Christ saith, we have a greater light, Mat. xi. 21. The gospel is a greater benefit than the law, and therefore our thankfulness should be greater than theirs.

First, here is an exhortation to sacrifice our bodies to God; then, an explication what this sacrifice is, 'It is your reasonable service,' and 'not fashioning yourselves to the world,' and the 'renewing of your minds' to the image of God in which they were created. Then follow two reasons to persuade: one drawn from the mercies of God, 'I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God;' the other drawn from the fruit of our regeneration, 'that ye may prove what that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God is.' The exhortation is, to sacrifice ourselves to God. It seems that the Jews grudged to sacrifice their beasts, therefore Paul thought that the Gentiles would grudge to sacrifice themselves, and therefore mark how he prepared himself for them.

*Brethren, I beseech you by the mercies of God.* This is his preparative. He calls them *brethren;* which sheweth, first, his affection to all Christians, which after Christ were called brethren; secondly, our adoption by Christ, which makes us brethren; thirdly, the duty which we owe one to another, as if we were brethren. The apostle doth not use this name so lightly as we, as you may see here, for Paul made it a preamble to persuade the Romans to godliness. So Abraham made it a mediator to keep peace between Lot and him: 'Are not we brethren,' saith Abraham? Gen. xiii. 8. As if he should say, Shall brethren fall out for trifles, like infidels? This was enough to pacify Lot, for Abraham to put him in mind that they were brethren; when he heard the name of brethren, straight his heart yielded, and the strife was ended. So this should be the lawyer to end quarrels between Christians, to call to mind that they are brethren. And they which have spent all at law have wished that they had taken this lawyer, to think, with Lot, whether it were meet for brethren to strive like enemies: with such reverence then did they use the name of *brethren;* but now there is no reverence in naming of God, for many speak of him when they do not think of him, and many never speak of him but when they swear by him.

When he had called them *brethren,* then he beseecheth them; 'Brethren, I beseech you.' This is the apostle's style. If God did

humble himself for man, much more should man humble himself for men. Therefore, though Paul speak of a matter wherein he might command, as he saith to Philemon, 'I might command thee,' yet as he did rather beseech him, so he doth rather beseech them. Mark the subtlety of wisdom, as I may call it. As the serpent did use policy to tempt, Gen. iii., so the preacher may use policy to convert; and so Paul won Agrippa to believe, by persuading him that he did believe, Acts xxvi. 27. It was Paul's office to teach the Romans; but it was Paul's policy to beseech the Romans. Until compulsion need, gentleness is better than bitterness; lenity deserves to go first, and correction hath no place if persuasion will serve.

*I beseech you, brethren.* We do not use to entreat and beseech, but for our profit; but Paul did beseech for their profit. We would have other humble themselves to us, but Paul humbled himself to his inferiors, to make them humble themselves to God. Here the preachers may take example of the preacher of the Gentiles. The loving phrase is the apostle's phrase; and he which beseecheth shall persuade easier than he which thundereth. Many have been drawn with the cords of love, which could never be hauled with the chains of iron. God is love, and his ministers must speak like love, or else they do not speak like Paul. He which fisheth for souls, and doth not take this net, shall fish all day in vain, as Peter fished all night, and caught nothing. Although a temperate preacher be a wise preacher, and this be our policy, to entreat and beseech you, like Paul, yet you should not look to be entreated like the guests which would not come to the banquet, Mat. xxii.; for you must be entreated to your profit. It is no reason that Christ pay and pray: the servant prayeth, but the master commandeth.

Yet Paul hath not done his preparative: he is loath that his suit should take the repulse, and therefore he useth a mediator unto them, and beseecheth them by the mercies of God: 'I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God.' Mercy is a loving solicitor, and worthy to be heard, because it heareth again. God doth entreat us by the same mediator that we entreat God: we entreat God for his mercy, and God entreateth us for his mercy. So that mercy is like a sign between us, which calleth God to hear us, and us to hear him. What will not a good subject do for a merciful prince? Many sweet things are in the word of God, but the name of *mercy* is the sweetest word in all the Scriptures, which made David harp upon it twenty-six times in one psalm: six and twenty times he repeats this in the 136th Psalm, 'For his mercy endureth for ever.'

It was such a cheerful note in his ears when he struck upon mercy, that, like a bird which is taught to record, when he had sung it, he sung it again, and when he had sung it again, he recorded it again, and made it the burden of his song, 'For his mercy endureth for ever.' Like a nightingale which, when she is in a pleasant vein, quavers and capers, and trebles upon it, so did David upon his mercy, 'For his mercy endureth for ever.' But here Paul speaks in the plural number: not by the *mercy*, but by the *mercies* of God.

There is a plurality of God's mercies: his lesser mercies in his corporal blessings, and his greater mercies in his spiritual blessings; his temporal mercies in earth, and his everlasting mercies in heaven; his preventing mercies in delivering us from sin, and his following mercies in pardoning of our sin. How many sins came with Adam, Gen. iii., and how many curses came with sin, so many mercies came with Christ to answer them both. Therefore, when Paul could not number them for multitude, he was fain to lay them down together in the gross sum, and in a word calls them *mercies;* as if he should say, I cannot number the mercies of God, but the less I can number them, the more they are. Thus much why Paul calleth them *brethren*, and why he *beseecheth* them, and why he remembereth them of God's *mercies*.

Now he hath prepared the way, he commenceth his suit, that they would 'give their bodies to God.' He speaks not here of the soul, though he would have them give their souls too, as you may see in the next verse; but he speaks here of the body, to shew that the body is a servant to God as well as the soul: both are too little, and therefore one is not enough. And therefore Paul saith, 'Glorify God in your bodies, and in your souls too,' 1 Cor. vi. 20. But here he speaks the rather of the body, to shew that their battle will be with the flesh, and that the flesh will be unwilling to this sacrifice; as Christ saith, 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is frail,' Mat. xxvi. 41; that is, the flesh will not afford anything to God, though he do never so much for her, yet she is like churlish Nabal, which will do nothing again. Therefore the apostle urgeth so to give the body; as if he should say, Draw forward that which draweth thee backward, and let thy conversion begin where sin hath his root. If you can win the flesh, which is like Nabal, the soul will come, like Abigail, and bring her train with her.

Now, to shew how we should give our bodies to God, the apostle saith, 'Give your bodies a sacrifice to God;' that is, you must give your bodies to God as if you did sacrifice them. The law appointed a sacrifice in which all the members were offered together. So ye

must give your members to God; that is, the body: for all is but parts of the body; therefore, if you must give your bodies, you must give eye, and ear, and tongue, and hand, and feet unto him. For 'the heart,' saith Paul, 'doth believe;' but because it is not enough to believe, therefore he addeth, 'the mouth doth confess,' Rom. x. 10. As it is as necessary to confess unto salvation, as to believe unto justification, so it is as necessary to sacrifice the tongue as the heart. What then? Is the tongue enough? Nay, saith Christ, 'He which hath an ear to hear, let him hear,' Mat. xi. 15. Is the ear enough? Nay, saith David, 'Lift up your hands to his sanctuary,' Ps. cxxxiv. 2. Is the hand enough? Nay, saith Solomon, 'Let thine eyes behold the right,' Prov. iv. 25. Is the eye enough? Nay, saith Solomon, 'Remove thy foot from evil,' Prov. iv. 27. So the word passeth, like a collector, from one member to another, to gather tribute for God, until the body have paid as well as the soul. Therefore, Deut. vi. 5, God commandeth not only 'Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy soul, and with all thy mind,' but 'with all thy strength;' that is, if thou canst do anything for him with the strength of thine hand, or the strength of thine eye, or the strength of thine ear, or any part else, thou art bound by this commandment to do it with all thy strength. Therefore, when David went about the service of God, he called all his powers together, summoning them like a crier: 'All that is within me, praise the Lord.' If every part look to be glorified of God, it is reason that every part should glorify him; for this is all that they pay. As every subject oweth loyalty unto his prince, so every member oweth a duty to his Creator: the heart to love him, the tongue to praise him, the eye to mark him, the ear to attend him, the hand to serve him, the foot to follow him; and every part should serve God as it serveth us, nay, more than it serveth us; because we are bound to love God more than ourselves. For it is said, 'Love God above all;' therefore we must give more to God's desire than to our own desire.

Christ hath a part in every part; nay, every part is his part, because he gave all for all. Shall the hand say to the heart, Serve thou him? Or the heart say to the tongue, Serve thou him? Or the tongue say to the eye, Serve thou him? Or the eye say to the foot, Serve thou him? Nay, if Christ be the head, every part will serve him, for all the body is ruled by the head; and therefore, if he be the head, every part of the body will serve him like a head.

Now, if you will know how every part may be a sacrifice, thus it

is: when thou canst say, with the virgin, 'My heart doth magnify the Lord,' Luke i. 46, then thine heart is a sacrifice to God; when thou canst say with Samuel, 'Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth,' 1 Sam. iii. 9, then thine ear is sacrificed to God; when thou canst say with David, 'Mine eyes are always towards the Lord,' Ps. xxv. 15, then thine eye is a sacrifice to God; when thou canst say with David, 'All the day long I stretch out mine hand to thee,' Ps. lxxxviii. 9, then thine hands are a sacrifice to God; when thou canst say with David, 'My foot standeth in uprightness,' Ps. xxvi. 12, then thy feet are a sacrifice to God. So at length, by following of these examples, every member is a sacrifice.

He which offereth this sacrifice is freely excused of all sacrifices besides; for since Christ sacrificed himself, God hath required none other sacrifice of the Jews nor Gentiles, but that they sacrifice themselves. Now, when God doth require of thee to sacrifice thy body, he doth but require thee to sacrifice the sins of thy body, as you may pick out of the next word, *be changed;* that is, change thy thoughts, change thy words, change thy works; let thy tongue speak no more idly, let thine eyes look no more to vanity, let thine ears hearken no more to folly, let thine hands work no more iniquity; and then thou hast sacrificed thy body.

This seems a dear sacrifice, to sacrifice thy body; yet thou seest it is but a cheap sacrifice, for it is nothing but to sacrifice thy sins, which would sacrifice thee. If God had required thee to sacrifice thy son to him, as he required Abraham, Gen. xxii. 2, wouldst thou not give him? But now he requireth nothing of thee but thy sins; it is as if he should sue unto thee for thy shame, and thy trouble, and thy guilt, and thy fear, that he might have all which hurts thee. What wilt thou part from, if thou wilt not part from thine hurt? Therefore sacrifice thy body, and thou hast sacrificed all that hurts thee.

Here Christ is the altar, and we the sacrifice, and the fire which kindleth it the love of God, and the smoke which goeth up the consumption of our sins; but a worldly man killed, and a spiritual man revived, and the sacrifice is ended.

This sacrifice goeth under three titles, *living, holy,* and *acceptable.* Every one persuades, with the apostle, that they should offer it; for in that it is a *holy* sacrifice, it cannot but please, because he is holy which takes it; in that it is a *living* sacrifice, it cannot lose them anything, because there is no death nor loss in it, as there was in the Jews' sacrifices; in that it is an *acceptable* sacrifice, it must needs benefit them, for when the sacrifice is accepted, the

sacrificer is accepted too; as Abel pleased when his sacrifice pleased, Gen. iv.

First, It is called a *living* sacrifice, because the beasts died when they were sacrificed; but men live when they are sacrificed, nay, they die unless they be sacrificed. As Abraham did not lose his son when he was content to sacrifice him to God, so men do not lose their pleasures when they sacrifice them to God. But as Christ saith, 'He which leaveth father or mother for me shall receive an hundred fold,' so he which leaveth any comfort for God shall receive an hundred comforts for it. For God's demands are not only demands, but gifts. He bids thee sacrifice thy body, that thou mightest partake of the sacrifice of his body. Here, then, is but one sacrifice for another, one body for another, a beggar's body for a king's body. Well may he require a living sacrifice, which hath given a dead sacrifice. Christ died for us; but he desireth not our death, but our life, that we should serve him with our life.

2. It is called an *holy* sacrifice, because our 'bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost,' 1 Cor. vi. 19; that is, if they are not, they should be, the temples of the Holy Ghost. But as the Jews abused the temple of stone, so we have abused the temple of flesh; and there is no way to make it holy again but for the Holy Ghost to dwell in it, that is, to sacrifice it to God, and then it is holy; because, as virtue came out of Christ to heal the woman's disease, so holiness cometh out of Christ to heal every man's sins, and then they are holy. As nothing doth please us unless it be some way like us, and agreeable to our nature, so nothing doth please God but that which is like God; therefore, because God is holy, no sacrifice doth please him but the holy sacrifice. Therefore, *holy* goeth before *acceptable*, to shew that our sacrifice is not acceptable unless it be holy; a living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice.

3. It is called an *acceptable* sacrifice, because no sacrifice is so accepted as when we offer ourselves. Therefore Samuel saith, 'Obedience is better than sacrifice,' 1 Sam. xv. 22; that is, it pleaseth God better than sacrifice. Now if we must sacrifice to God, we should do as we do to princes; that is, offer that which may be accepted, that we may be accepted for our gifts, or else they are better undone than done. When Cain had sacrificed to God, because his sacrifice was not accepted, therefore Moses saith, that 'his countenance was cast down,' Gen. iv. 5; but if we sacrifice our bodies, our countenance need not be cast down, for Paul saith that this sacrifice is accepted. All other sacrifices were kindled with the fire of the temple, but this sacrifice is like the sacrifice of Elijah,

which God kindled himself with fire from heaven, 1 Kings xviii. 38; and therefore this must needs be acceptable, which man only doth not offer, but God himself doth offer.

When the apostle ends our sacrifice with this clause, *acceptable*, he meaneth that this should be the level of all our thoughts; that whatsoever we think, or speak, or do, be acceptable and liking unto God. As David thought to build the temple, but would not build it when Nathan told him that God would not have him build it, 1 Chron. xvii. 1, &c.; as Ananias would not baptize Saul, but did baptize him when he understood that God would have him baptized, Acts ix. 13, &c.; as Joseph would not take Mary to wife so long as he thought God did disallow his marriage, but did marry her when the angel told him that he should marry her, Mat. i. 19, &c.; so a good man will do nothing before he do consult with God's word, and all that he doeth he approveth unto God before he doeth it: if it be not his word and will, then he turneth back, as if the wind and weather were against him, always reforming his own will to God's will, that his thoughts, and words, and works may be acceptable. If reason teach us this, that when we offer unto God, we must give him an acceptable sacrifice, an acceptable honour, an acceptable service, then why do we not give him that which he asketh? for he knoweth what is acceptable to him. If he ask the first-fruits, we must not offer him the last fruits, for the first is acceptable. So if he appoint his discipline, we may not set up our discipline, for that is not acceptable to him, but to us.

Now Paul shews what this sacrifice is; it is 'your reasonable service of God,' lest they should grudge to sacrifice their bodies, he sheweth that he meaneth but the sins of their bodies. For this sacrifice, saith Paul, is your service, 'your reasonable service.' He calleth it 'a reasonable service,' because it is not in ceremonies, like the Jews' service, but in spirit, as Peter saith; then, because it is that service which every man's reason and conscience doth tell him that he oweth unto God, it may well be called a reasonable service, because it is so reasonable. Therefore if we will not serve God thus, that is, as our reason teacheth us, then we serve him not like men, but like beasts void of reason, whom God may be said to rule, but they cannot be said to obey, because they are ruled perforce. All things do yield a service to God, but all things do not yield a reasonable service, which he requireth of man. There was no reason why Christ should serve us; but there is great cause why we should serve Christ, because he served us without cause; so that I may say, Christ requireth but a reasonable sacrifice for an

unreasonable sacrifice, a living sacrifice for a dead sacrifice, a cheap sacrifice for a precious sacrifice, counting us as it were like to the poor widow, of whom he is content to take a mite, because we are needy.

Thus much of our reasonable service. The law of this service is laid down in these words, 'Fashion not yourselves to the world.' The world followeth the world, 'But I,' saith Christ to his disciples, 'have chosen you out of the world,' John xv. 19; therefore do not you follow the world. The world is taken sometime for heaven, and earth, and sea, which are parts of the world; sometime for the men of the world; sometime for the elect in the world, but most commonly it is taken for the wicked in the world, John i. 10, because the wicked are most common. Like a man which by often faulting is grown to an evil name, so the world, which doth not signify evil of itself, is taken for evil, because it is accustomed to do evil, John vii. 7, John viii. 23; and therefore the devil is called 'the god of this world,' 2 Cor. iv. 4, because the world's fashions are the devil's fashions. Therefore 'fashion not yourselves unto the world,' lest you be in the devil's fashion. Then you must not prank up yourselves like players, for this is the fashion of the world; then you must not respect persons more than justice, for this is the fashion of the world; then you must not flatter to please, for this is the fashion of the world; then you must not deceive to grow rich, for this is the fashion of the world; then you must not seek revenge for every word, for this is the fashion of the world; then you must not take scorn to be told of your faults, for this is the fashion of the world; then you must not give alms to be seen, for this is the fashion of the world; then you must not obey for fear of the law, for this is the fashion of the world; then you must not receive the sacrament for order, for this is the fashion of the world; then you must not come to church for custom, for this is the fashion of the world; then you must not make religion but a table-talk, for this is the fashion of the world; then you must not turn with the time, for this is the fashion of the world; then you must not defer to do good till you die, for this is the fashion of the world. The world is a bad pattern to follow, because, as the flesh followeth the devil, so the world followeth the flesh. Therefore, say no more, We must do as the world doeth, but rather, We must not do as the world doeth. You say you go so, because it is the fashion. God saith, Go not so, because it is the fashion. If you come but in the fashion, you shall be in the abuse. There is no man that weareth the cutter's fashion, but he is a cutter; none which cutteth

his hair like them which are proud, but he is proud; none which coloureth her face like them which are wanton, but she is wanton; none which sweareth like them which lie, but he will lie as well as swear; therefore, make not your life of the world's fashion. The wedding-garment was of another fashion than all the rest, Mat. xxii.; therefore, if thou fashionest thyself like the rest, thou hast not on thee the wedding-garment, for this was nothing like unto the rest. Christ's garment was of another manner of fashion differing from the world, John xix. 23; so thy life must be of another fashion than the world's, or else as the fashion of the world passeth away, so thou shalt pass and perish with it. God doth not like the fashion of the world; and surely he liketh as ill the fashion of idolatry, or the fashion of antichrist, as the fashion of the world. He which biddeth us to 'refrain from every show of evil,' 1 Thes. v. 22, would have us refrain from the show of idolatry, and the show of heresy, for these are the greatest evils. But if we be not idolatrous, yet we have the show of idolatry; if we be not of antichrist's religion, yet we be of antichrist's fashion, so long as we shew forth the same badge and cognisance. You know what I mean: this is to jump with the world, and leap to hell; this is not to be in fashion, but out of fashion. Therefore now ye shall hear the best fashions.

It followeth, 'Be you changed by the renewing of your minds.' This is the second part of your reasonable service, the changing and renewing of the mind to the likeness wherein it was created. As before he required you to give your bodies, so here he requireth you to give your minds. Outward service is like a tinkling cymbal; though it hath never so pleasant a sound, yet it doth not please God, because it hath no mind to please him; so is the service of the eye, or the ear, or the hand, or the foot, if the mind be away. It may please others, like the cymbal, but it pleaseth not God.

The body is a servant as well as the soul; but there is no promise made to the bodily service, but to the spiritual service; for unless the mind work, the body will serve but a while. Therefore, 'make clean within,' saith Christ, Mat. xxiii. 26. Sanctification begins within; until the mind be renewed, the body is never sacrificed. Therefore now Paul shews as it were the knife that must kill this sacrifice, that is, the mind. The mind must sacrifice the body: 'Be ye changed;' as if he should say, Suffer yourselves to be changed, as Noah suffered himself to be covered, Gen. x.; that is, 'Grieve not the Spirit,' 1 Thes. v. 19, do not resist God, be not against your conversion, and God will convert you, God will comfort you, God will renew you. By this 'renewing of our minds,' Paul

calleth to our remembrance that once we had a pure mind, and that we come the nearer unto God the nearer we draw to that similitude again; and therefore the Scripture calleth so often for a new man, a new creature, a new heart. As ye may read, Ps. li. 10, David prayeth the Lord to 'create him a new heart;' not to correct his old heart, but to create him a new heart; shewing that his heart was like an old garment, so rotten and tattered that he could make no good of it by patching or piecing, but even must cut it off, and take a new. Therefore Paul saith, 'Cast off the old man;' not pick him and wash him till he be clean, but cast him off, and begin anew, as David did. Will ye know what this renewing is? It is the repairing of the image of God, until we be like Adam when he dwelt in paradise. As there is a whole old man, so there must be a whole new man. The old man must change with the new man, wisdom for wisdom, love for love, fear for fear; his worldly wisdom for heavenly wisdom, his carnal love for spiritual love, his servile fear for Christian fear, his idle thoughts for holy thoughts, his vain words for wholesome words, his fleshly works for sanctified works.

If the mind must be so renewed, I would know of the papists where are their 'pure naturals.' If our naturals were pure, our minds need not to be renewed; for it is good to be pure, and evil to change it; but because there is no pureness in us, therefore the apostle would have us changed. Again, let them tell me why our minds should be renewed, if we have free will to do good if we list; but because our minds are so corrupted that we have no free will to good, nor will to do good neither, therefore the apostle would have our minds renewed. Thus one word of God hath battered two castles of antichrist's.

# A LOOKING-GLASS FOR CHRISTIANS.

# A LOOKING-GLASS FOR CHRISTIANS.

*I say, through the grace that is given unto me, to every one that is among you, that no man presume to understand above that which is meet to understand; but that he understand according to sobriety, as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*—ROM. XII. 3.

FIRST of the preface, and then of the counsel. In the first verse of this chapter Paul persuadeth the Romans 'by the mercy of God' towards *them;* here he persuadeth them 'by the grace of God towards *him.*' Paul speaks like a man on his death-bed, which is set to give good counsel, and goeth from one lesson to another, as though he would speak all with a breath. First, he counselled them to make their bodies serve God, because the body is a servant as well as the soul; then he forbade them to fashion themselves to the world, because no man can serve two contrary masters; then he advised them to renew their minds, because, except the mind be reformed, the body will serve but a while; and he setteth them to seek God's will, because the will of man doth seduce him. And now, to make up his testament, as it were, he admonisheth them to rest in the knowledge of God's will, and not to search farther, nor to be proud of their knowledge, but to use their knowledge to humble their pride. This lesson may seem vain to the Romans, for they were not yet come to be wise, and he counselleth them not to be too wise. Paul saith that 'the Gentiles sought after wisdom,' 1 Cor. i. 22; but he saith here that 'the preaching of the gospel seemeth foolishness unto them,' which was wisdom; and therefore God calleth them 'a foolish nation,' Deut. xxxii. 21, because they counted the true wisdom foolishness, and their own folly wisdom. For this cause there was such emulation between the Jew and the Gentile; one despised another, because they did not accord what

wisdom was, although both sought for it. Therefore, that ye may not only seek wisdom, as the Gentiles did, but find wisdom, as Solomon did, Paul layeth a foundation for wisdom to stay upon, which he calleth *sobriety*: 'Be wise according to sobriety.'

A word of his preface, which is this, 'by the grace of God which is given to me.' Because he speaks to all, and his charge is of great moment; and they which think themselves wise will hardly be persuaded but they are wise; therefore he comes with authority, like an ambassador from God, and saith, 'By the grace of God which is given to me;' that is, by the virtue of my apostleship, which I have not received from men, but from God, not from earth, but from heaven; 'I charge you that no man among you,' whether he be learned or unlearned, whether he be an hearer or a teacher, 'presume to know above that which is meet to know;' that is, make himself wiser than he is, or boast of the graces which God hath given him, or despise the gifts of God in others, or rove beyond his calling, or trouble his head with curiosity; 'but that he be wise according to sobriety;' that is, walk within his vocation, be humble in his knowledge, and use his gifts to the profit of others; 'as God hath given to every man the measure of faith;' that is, remembering that it is a gift of God, which hath dealt gifts to others as well as to him, that they might do him good, as he may do them good. So that if you ask Paul, as the Jews asked Christ, 'By what authority doest thou this?' he sheweth his letters patent from the King himself, 'By the grace of God,' &c. Well doth he call his apostleship 'the grace of God;' for he was a persecutor of the same doctrine which he preached; and therefore, if it had not been God's marvellous grace, he should never have been an apostle. It was as strange to hear that persecuting Saul was among the apostles, Acts ix. 21, as to hear that king Saul was among the prophets; but 'by the grace of God,' saith Paul, so it is; I did not usurp this calling, but it was given me. I came not from men, as I did before when I persecuted, but I am sent from God. I do not count mine office a labour or a burden, but I esteem it a grace, the grace of God both to me and to you. By this Paul teacheth us to receive the ministry of the word as a grace from him. For if Paul speak by grace, then you hear by grace; as he said, 'I speak by the grace of God which is given me;' so you may say, We hear by the grace of God which is given to us; and therefore I exhort you, as he did the Corinthians, 'Receive not the grace of God in vain,' 2 Cor. vi. 1.

Now to his counsel, 'Let no man presume to understand above that which is meet to understand, but let every man understand

according to sobriety.' When the apostle speaketh of things meet to understand, he signifieth that it is not meet to search all things. It seems that many among the Romans were sick of our disease, which is, to think ourselves wiser than we are; therefore he which taught them to be wise in all his exhortations before, teacheth them here not to be *over-wise*, but *sober-wise*. As God appointeth the Jews a measure, how much manna they might gather, so Paul appointeth the Romans a measure, how much wisdom they might gather. The Jews' measure of manna was so much as an omer would hold; the Romans' measure of wisdom is so much as sobriety would hold. For as the manna which the Jews gathered over an omer did them no good, but mould and fust, so the wisdom which men gather more than sobriety doth no good, but puff them, and corrupt them, and turn them either into pride, or into envy, or into wiles, or into strife, or one cogitation or other, as their superfluous manna turned into worms. When Paul entered into this sage doctrine, which I may call the lopping or pruning of wisdom, which must be kept low, like a man which is given to be pursy and gross, he summoneth all sorts of men to hear him, as though he spake of a fault, like the darkness of Egypt, which went over the whole land; therefore he excepts no calling nor person, but crieth, 'I say unto every one,' &c. The wise, and the ancient, and the learned, are to learn this lesson. 'One thing is behind,' saith Christ to him which thought he had done all; so one thing is behind to him which thinks that he knoweth all. Art thou wise? Be not too wise, like thy mother Eve, which would know as much as God. Paul hath two suits to move unto you: the first is, that ye would be wise; the other is, that ye would not be too wise, for too good, we say, is stark naught; so he which is too wise is a very fool. Nay, saith Solomon, 'There is more hope of a fool, than of him which is wise in his own conceit.' There is hope of a fool that he may be wise, because he will hear instruction, but of him that is wise in his own conceit, there is no hope to make him wise, because he thinketh he knoweth that which he should learn. For this cause Christ pronounced his woes to the pharisees, and his doctrines to the people; because 'the whole,' saith Christ, 'have no need of a physician,' that is, they which think themselves wise, like the pharisees, think they have no need of a teacher; and therefore Christ doth not teach them, but rate them, and teach them which did not think themselves wise. Therefore, if we will be Christ's scholars, we must be Paul's scholars, that is, 'presume to know no more than is meet to know;' and then he will teach us as much as is meet to know.

There is as much need to warn men, with Paul, that they be not over wise, as to warn them, with Solomon, to 'seek wisdom.' Prov. iv. 7, for there is an error of the left hand and of the right hand. A man may be as well too wise as too simple, too careful as too careless, too hasty as too slack; and therefore Solomon saith, 'Turn not to the left hand, nor to the right,' Prov. iv. 27; and again, 'Be not too just, neither make thyself too wise,' Eccles. vii. 16; and again, 'If thou have found honey, eat not too much,' Prov. xxv. 16. All which places do shew that men are given to over-reach, like Moses, which, when he had heard God, would needs see him too, which was not possible for man to behold. This is the last sleight of Satan; when he cannot keep men from knowledge, then he casteth how to puff them up with their knowledge, which makes them as vain as ignorance made them before. Festus did not apply truly when he said, that too much learning had made Paul mad, Acts xxvi. 14; but it is true, that too much learning hath made others mad, and would have made Paul mad too, if he had been as proud of his learning as Festus was of his honour. And, for all he was an apostle, yet it began to work upon him; as he saith, 'I was almost puffed up with the multitude of revelations,' 2 Cor. xii. 7; he was not wise above sobriety, but he was almost wise above sobriety. And therefore he might well sound the retire of wisdom. Look to your wisdom, and learning, and knowledge; for I myself was almost puffed up with it. If Paul might learn his own lesson, then it is like that none here have learned it. The scribes and pharisees did not come to Christ, as the people came to John, to ask, 'Master, what shall we do?' But these rabbis might have come to Christ, as well as their scholars came to Christ's disciples, to whom he would have answered like Paul, 'Be wise unto sobriety.'

Five things, in my judgment, are to be noted in these words: The first is, that wisdom is a thing to be desired, for when he saith, *not above sobriety*, he would have us wise *within sobriety*. The second is, that every man affecteth a kind of wisdom, either according to sobriety, as Paul counselled the Romans, or above sobriety, as the Romans did before. The third is, few are wise, as God counteth wisdom; and therefore Paul speaketh to all, as though all were to learn this lesson. The fourth is, that sobriety doth shew, like a glass, who are wise, and who are not. The last is, that the wisdom which goeth beyond sobriety doth hurt him which hath it, and others; for when Paul saith, 'Be wise to sobriety,' he implieth, that who is not so is in a kind of distemperature, like one scarce sober. As the meat which is not digested with exercise doth

rumble in the stomach, so the knowledge which is not digested with sobriety troubleth the brain.

Touching the first point, the forbidden tree seemed to Eve a tree to be desired, because it would teach them knowledge, Gen. iii. 6. Nature taught her, that knowledge was a thing to be desired, though the serpent pointed her to a wrong tree. For indeed the tree of life was the tree of knowledge; and when they went to the other tree, they changed their knowledge for ignorance, as they changed their holiness for wickedness. Beside, all other virtues are called wisdom, Prov. iv. 7, to shew that wisdom is the bond of virtues, and as much to be desired as all the rest. Beside, God himself is called Wisdom, to shew that in nothing we can come nearer God than in the study of wisdom. Beside, the word, the Spirit, and the ministry, are all appointed to teach wisdom, Prov. v. 7; because other things are not so necessary, therefore they have not so many schoolmasters.

Solomon, speaking of wisdom, preferreth it before silver, to shew that we should desire it before silver; then before gold, to shew that we should desire it before gold; then before precious stones, to shew that we should desire it before precious stones, Prov. iii. 14, 15, and viii. 13. Therefore Solomon prayeth for wisdom, and Moses studieth for wisdom, and the queen of Sheba travelled for wisdom; to shew that wisdom will requite all the labours and pains that are taken for her. As wisdom is excellent above all, so it is affected of all, as oil was both of the wise virgins and the foolish virgins. Nay, the very name to be wise is so plausible, that Paul saith, 'The Grecians sought after wisdom,' 1 Cor. i. 22; they whom God calleth 'a foolish nation,' Deut. xxxii. 21: 'The foolish nation,' saith Paul, 'sought after wisdom,' though he doth not say that they found wisdom. And in the second of Matthew we find, that the Gentiles called those men that were singular amongst them by the name of wise men, as we call them noblemen which are singular amongst us; shewing that wise men should be noblemen, or noblemen should be wise men, according to the saying of David, 'Be wise, ye which judge the earth,' Ps. ii. 10. And likewise in Paul we read, that they which never knew what wisdom meant, yet named themselves philosophers, that is, lovers of wisdom, Col. ii. 8; as though there were such a thing behind, which all men should love. Thus wisdom hath been a mark which every man hath shot at, ever since Eve sought to be as wise as her Maker. But as an hundred shoot, and not one hits the white, so some come short of wisdom, and some fly over, and some go beside,

like the arrows which Jonathan shot at David. Therefore Solomon, speaking of wise men, saith, 'I have scarce found one among a thousand,' Eccles. vii. 28. Therefore Paul makes a general charge, 'I say to every one, Be wise according to sobriety;' as though every one had too much wisdom, or too little. Virtue is a mean betwixt two vices, which couch so close beside her, that one can scarce see her; covetousness on the one side, and prodigality on the other side, and charity in the midst; pride on the one side, rusticity on the other side, and comeliness in the midst; flattery on the one side, malice on the other side, and love in the midst; carefulness on the one side, carelessness on the other side, and diligence in the midst; diffidence on the one side, presumption on the other side, and faith in the midst; superstition on the one side, atheism on the other side, and religion in the midst; ignorance on the one side, curiosity on the other side, and knowledge in the midst; so that there is but one virtue still for two vices; therefore extremities bear rule in this world. Either we cry *Hosanna*, or else *Crucifige;* either Christ must not wash our feet, or else he must wash our feet and body too; either we will have Paul a god, or else we say he is cursed of God, Acts xxviii. 4, 6; either we say, 'Touch not, taste not,' for it is unclean, or else we say, 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die.' If we love, we do over-love; if we fear, we over-fear; if we be careful, we be over-careful; if we be merry, we are over-merry; if we be solemn, we are over-solemn; if so, we cannot be wise, but we are over-wise; so soon as we are thought to know something, we would be thought ignorant of nothing. There is a kind of down or curdle upon wisdom, like the train of gentlewomen, which is more than needs, which we call the crotchets of the brain, which must be weeded out, as the tree is lopped when it groweth too thick; or else they will perish in the brain, like a scum which seetheth into the broth. The Scripture speaketh of many ancient, and many rich, and many strong, and many mighty; but of one wise man, and yet that wise man, too, before he died, stepped beyond sobriety. Therefore, even as ye look, lest other men's wisdom should deceive you, so look lest your own wisdom deceive yourselves. There is a kind of wisdom which is more contrary to wisdom than ignorance. As good corn and bad corn come both to market to be sold, and the bad would have as much money as the good; so true wisdom and false wisdom come both, shew both, offer both, praise both, and, as Jacob took Leah for Rachel, so many take the worse for the better. Pharaoh said, 'Come, let us do wisely,' when he went about that

which destroyed him, Exod. i. 10. The scribes and the pharisees and the elders took counsel against Christ, as though they would most wisely prevent their salvation. Judas would betray his Master wisely, and therefore he came with a kiss, and said, 'Hail, Master,' when he betrayed him. Cain thought to murder his brother wisely; and therefore he called him aside into the field, as though he would walk with him, that none might see, Gen. iv. 8. Jezebel thought to kill Naboth wisely; and therefore she suborned false witnesses, and proclaimed a fast before the murder. Eve thought it wisdom to eat the forbidden fruit, Gen. iii. 6. Absalom thought it wisdom to lie with his father's concubines, 2 Sam. xvi. 21, 22; the idle servant thought it wisdom to hide his talent; the false steward thought it wisdom to deceive his master. All these were wise above sobriety, of whom we may say with Paul, 'presuming to be wise, they became fools,' Rom. i. 22; because they were wise to evil, their wisdom had but an evil end. All these examples are recorded to give credit unto this doctrine, 'Be not wise above sobriety.'

As Paul would have the Galatians' zeal according to knowledge, so he would have the Romans' knowledge according to sobriety. He which forbiddeth us to trust in our riches, and in our friends, and in our strength, forbiddeth us to trust in our wisdom: 'Trust not in thine own wisdom.' We count the simple fools, but God counts the crafty fools. He which thinks himself wise is a fool *ipso facto*. And to shew that they are most fools of all, the apostle saith, that God chose the foolish to confound them, 1 Cor i. 27. It is said, *Be merry and wise;* but it may be said, *Be wise and wise;* for every wisdom is not wise. As the wise men went no farther than they were guided by the star, Mat. ii., so a wise man should run no farther than he is led by the word. When God hath brought thee unto goodness, he saith, *Acquiesce*, set down thy rest; go no farther than goodness; so when thou art come to wisdom, rest where thou art well, as the dove did in the ark.

The first blessing which Christ pronounceth to any, is to 'the poor in spirit.' As Paul would have you rich in knowledge, so Christ would have you poor in spirit, that is, humble in your knowledge; for the proud knowledge is the devil's knowledge, and wisdom to the wicked is like the ark to the Philistines, which did them more hurt than good. Therefore, as God appointed the people their bounds which they might not pass, when he talked with Moses in the mount; so he hath appointed certain precincts of wisdom, which when we transgress, we may be said to exceed our commis-

sion; like Shimei, when he went beyond the river, which Solomon forbade him. The rail or pale of wisdom is sobriety. As wisdom is made overseer of all other virtues, so sobriety is made overseer of wisdom, to measure it forth in even portions and due seasons, that none of God's gifts be lost. As water is unto the wine, to allay the heat of it, and salt is to meat, to make it savoury; so sobriety is to wisdom, to make it wholesome and profitable to him which hath it, and them which seek it of him. 'If thou hast found honey,' saith Solomon, 'take not too much, lest thou surfeit,' Prov. xxv. 16. Nay, if thou hast found wisdom, take not too much, lest thou surfeit. There is a surfeit of wisdom, which is the dangerousest surfeit of all other; when a man begins, like Paul, to be puffed up, which was Aaron's and Miriam's disease, when they murmured against Moses, because they thought themselves fitter to govern than he, Num. xii. 2. No virtue is better than wisdom and humility; but if a man be proud of his wisdom and humility, then the virtue is turned into vice. 'If the light be darkness,' saith Christ, 'how great is that darkness?' So if our humility be pride, how great is that pride! If our knowledge be ignorance, how great is that ignorance! Therefore, as we remember, *be wise as serpents;* so let us remember, *be simple as doves;* or else we drown in our wisdom, like a light that quencheth in his own tallow.

Now, that ye may know how to be wise according to sobriety, there be certain properties of this sober wisdom which I will shew you.

The first is, *Not to arrogate to ourselves more than God hath given us.* As the man said, 'I believe, Lord, help my unbelief;' so the wise man may say, I understand, Lord, help my ignorance. For one thing which we know, we are ignorant of a thousand things which we should know; yet the foolish virgins would be thought as wise as their sisters.

No man can abide to be disgraced in his wit; we had rather seem wicked than simple. As every bird thinks her own birds fairest, so every man thinks his own wit ripest. 'There is a generation,' saith Solomon, 'which are pure in their own conceit, but they are not cleansed from their filthiness,' Prov. xxx. 12. So there is a generation which are wise in their own conceit, but they are not cleansed from their foolishness. There is a generation of such wise men; but he which is wise indeed saith, 'I am more foolish than any man,' Prov. xxx. 2. He which is called WISDOM saith, 'Learn of me to be humble,' Mat. xi. 29. And he which was counted the wisest man before Solomon, is called 'the mildest man upon the

earth,' Num. xii. 3. Therefore James, describing the wisdom which is from above, saith, that it is 'gentle wisdom,' James iii. 17; the gentle are not arrogant, but the scornful.

The second property is, *Not to glory of anything in ourselves.* As James saith, 'Let him which is merry sing psalms;' so Paul saith, 'Let him which glorieth, glory in the Lord.' For, as we say, 'Thine is the kingdom,' so we say, 'Thine is the glory;' and therefore David saith, 'Not unto me, Lord, not unto me,' &c. Oh, saith Satan, this is a thing to glory of, knowledge, and learning, and wisdom; or else what should a man be proud of? But when Christ heard his disciples glory that they had the gift of miracles, which is a greater matter than knowledge, yet he said, 'Glory not in this, that ye can work miracles;' therefore glory not in this, that ye know him which can work miracles. If that wisdom be given thee, then thou hast received it; if thou hast received it, then I say with Paul, 'Why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?' 1 Cor. iv. 7. Wisdom is not so base a thing, that thine own glory should be the end of it. But, as Esther thought that her honour was given her for the glory of God, so the learned should think that their learning is given them for the glory of God; the rich should think that their riches are given them for the glory of God; the wise should think that their wisdom is given them for the glory of God. The value and praise and honour of wisdom is to do good; if we be wise to do evil, we are not wise as serpents, but wise serpents.

The third property is, *Not to despise others.* Therefore James calleth the true wisdom a 'peaceable wisdom,' James iii. 17, because it makes no strife. As he which had five talents did not disdain him which had but one, so they which have more gifts should not contemn them which have but few. For as the unicorn doth more good with one horn than other beasts do with two, so some men doth more good with one gift than others do with five, because they choke them with pride. When the pharisee said, 'I am not like this publican,' he said true; for then he was not like the publican indeed, because the publican was better than he was.

The fourth property is, *To keep within our calling.* He which meddleth with that which he hath not to do with, is compared to one that catcheth a dog by the ears, and dares neither hold him still, nor let him go; so he can neither go forward for want of skill, nor backwark for shame. Paul saith he was set apart to preach the gospel; so to every work God hath set some men apart, and fitted them to that work; as he did Bezaleel to the building of the

tabernacle; and therefore, unless a man be set apart to this work, he should think of Peter, which, when he struck with the sword, was bid to put up his sword again, for the sword was not committed to him, but the keys. In Exod. xvii. 11, we find Joshua fighting, and Moses praying, and Aaron and Hur holding up his hands; so every man should have a several work. God hath given certain gifts to certain callings; as no man can exceed his gifts, so no man should exceed his calling. It is not meet that he should be a free-man which was never a prentice, nor that he should leap into Moses's chair that never sat at Gamaliel's feet. If thou doest never so well, and be not called to it, the Scripture saith straight, 'Who hath required this of thee?' thou art an usurper of another's office. 'A fool,' saith Solomon, 'is meddling;' shewing that a wise man meddleth not but where he hath to do. We are compared to a body; some men are like the head, and they must rule; some are like the tongue, and they must teach; some are like the hand, and they must work. When this order is confounded, then that cometh to pass which we read of Eve; when the woman would lead her husband, both fell into the ditch, Gen. iii. Therefore, as Christ said, 'Who hath made me a judge over you?' Luke xii. 14, so they which are not judges should say, Who hath made me a judge? He which is not a teacher should say, Who hath made me a teacher? He which is not a ruler should say, Who hath made me a ruler? And this is a better peace-maker than the lawyer.

The fifth property is, *Not to be curious in searching mysteries.* This Paul meaneth when he saith, 'Let no man presume to understand above that which is meet to understand.' The star, when it came to Christ, stood still, and went no farther; so when we come to the knowledge of Christ, we should stand still and go no farther; for Paul was content to 'know nothing but Christ crucified.' It is not necessary to know that which God hath not revealed; and the well of God's secrets is so deep, that no bucket of man can sound it; therefore we must row in shallow waters, because our boats are light, and small, and soon overturned. They which have such crotchets and circumstances in their brain, I have marked this in them, that they seldom find any room for that which they should know, but go to and fro, seeking and seeking, like them which sought Elias's body, and found it not. Let men desire knowledge of God as Solomon did; but not desire knowledge as Eve did. For these aspiring wits fall again like Babel, and run into doubts, while they seek for resolutions. As the Jews,[1] when they heard the

[1] It does not seem certain that they were Jews, Acts xix. 13.—Ed.

apostle preach, burnt their curious books, and had no more delight to study such toys; so when men come to the truth, they are content to leave these fancies, and say with Paul, 'I know nothing but Christ crucified.' Curious questions and vain speculations are like a plume of feathers, which some will give anything for, and some will give nothing for. Paul rebuked them which troubled their heads about genealogies; how would he reprove men and women of our days, if he did see how they busy their heads about vain questions, tracing upon the pinnacles, where they may fall, while they might walk upon the pavement without danger? Some have a great deal more desire to learn where hell is, than to know any way how they may escape it; to hear what God did purpose before the world began, rather than to learn what he will do when the world is ended; to understand whether they shall know one another in heaven, than to know whether they belong to heaven. This rock hath made many shipwrecks, that men search mysteries before they know principles; like the Bethshemites, which were not content to see the ark, but they must pry into it, and finger it. Commonly the simplest men busy their heads about the highest matters; so that if they meet with a rough and crabbed question, like a knob in the tree, and while they hack and hew at it with their own wits to make it plain, their saw sticks fast in the cleft, and cannot get out again; at last in wrath they become like malcontents with God, as though the Scripture were not perfect, and either fall into despair, or into contempt of all. Therefore it is good to leave off learning where God hath left off teaching; for they which have an ear where God hath no tongue, hearken not unto God, but to the tempter, as Eve did to the serpent. This is the rule whereby a man may know whether his wisdom stand right. As the covetous man is needy in the midst of his riches, so a proud man is ignorant in the midst of his knowledge. Now if our wisdom were examined by these properties, I fear, as the angel said, 'Thou hast examined them which called themselves apostles, and found them liars,' Rev. ii. 2; so I might say, I have examined them which call themselves wise men, and found them liars. Indeed Solomon saith, 'Many boast of their goodness, but who can find a good man?' Prov. xx. 6. So, many boast of their wisdom, but who can find a wise man? They are wise, saith he, in their own judgment; but he saith not that they are wise in others' judgments. As Paul told the Athenians that they were too religious, so he would tell many now that they were too wise; so wise, that they are fools again. The Galatians' zeal was without knowledge, but our knowledge is without zeal.

'Having a show of holiness,' Paul saith; so some have a show of knowledge. But as the show of holiness is hypocrisy, so the show of wisdom is vanity. If they which think themselves wise be wise, then we have more wise men than beggars; and peradventure there be more wise men than of any other sort beside.

As you have heard the notes of them which are 'wise according to sobriety,' so if you would know such as are wise above sobriety, you shall discern them by these marks: First, they will have all the talk wheresoever they come, like parrots. Secondly, they contemn others, like the pharisees. Thirdly, they spurn at him which tells them of their faults, like Abner. Fourthly, they jump with Cæsar, like the Herodians. Fifthly, they turn with the time, like Demas. Sixthly, they seek their own credit by the discredit of others, like the enemies of Paul. Seventhly, they love to hear their own praise, like Herod. Eighthly, above all things they would have their own will, like Jezebel. Whensoever these eight marks meet, there is a wise man and a fool; a wise man in his own conceit, and a fool in proof. These are the wise men of the north, and the philosophers of England.

Thus you have heard the wisdom which is according to sobriety. If any man do see the spots of his own face in this glass, let him wash, and be clean. 'He that is wise,' saith Solomon, 'is wise to himself;' but he that is over wise, is wise against himself. Here you may see that a note above *Ela* is a jarring note, and always makes a discord in the harmony. Christ would not have us wise serpents, but as wise *as* serpents, lest they which are like serpents should circumvent us. To be wise to evil is an evil wisdom; and there is no such enemy unto knowledge as the opinion of knowledge; for one which is wedded unto his own wit will never be counselled of any. Therefore how necessary is it to remember this doctrine; and God grant we may remember it. I cannot tell how it comes to pass that no man can serve God unless he know God (for none do obey him except they which do know him), and yet it is said that there was never so much knowledge and so little goodness. Surely as Christ said to his disciples, 'O ye of little faith!' so he might say to us, O ye of little understanding! for there is not too much wisdom, but too much ostentation; humility is none of our virtues. They which should teach others to be wise according to sobriety, pass the bounds of sobriety themselves. Every man hath a commonwealth in his head, and travails to bring forth new fashions. As the Jews were not content with such rules as God had appointed them, but would have a king like the Gentiles; as

the papists are not content with such laws as God hath appointed them, but they will have traditions, like the Jews; so the wisdom of this world is to devise better orders, better laws, better titles, better callings, better discipline than God hath devised himself. 'Every plant,' saith Christ, 'which my Father hath not planted shall be rooted up;' that is, every title, and every office, and every calling which God hath not planted, shall be rooted up. To be wise according to this book, is to be wise according to sobriety. Therefore seek the wisdom of Christ, for the wisdom of the serpent is turned into a curse, the wisdom of the pharisees is turned into a woe, the wisdom of Ahithophel is turned to folly, the wisdom of Nimrod is turned to confusion, the wisdom of the steward is turned to expulsion, the wisdom of Jezebel is turned to death. This is the end of the deceiver's wisdom, of the extortioner's wisdom, of the usurer's wisdom, of the persecutor's wisdom, of the flatterer's wisdom, of the sorcerer's wisdom, of the hypocrite's wisdom, of the Machiavellian's wisdom. As Moses's serpent devoured the sorcerer's serpent, so God's wisdom shall devour man's wisdom.

Wherefore, 'By the grace of God which is given unto me, I say unto every one of you,' with Paul, 'Be wise unto sobriety.' Be not ashamed to seem ignorant of some things, but remember that it is better to seem ignorant, than to be proud. Thus you have heard what wisdom is; now let us pray unto God for it.

# FOOD FOR NEW-BORN BABES.

# FOOD FOR NEW-BORN BABES.

*As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow by it.*—1 PETER II. 2.

THIS scripture, beloved in the Lord, containeth an exhortation to incite and stir up the believing Jews, that as God had enlightened them with some knowledge of his truth, and sanctified them in some measure with the grace of his Spirit; so they would proceed and go on, and daily increase more and more in the faith and fear of Jesus Christ, like the glorious sun, which still augmenteth and redoubleth his heat and light, till it come to the midst of heaven, where is perfect day. Now the means whereby we receive all our growth and increase in God, is the lively preaching of the word of truth. And therefore the apostle, by a figurative and borrowed kind of speech, earnestly presseth them to thirst and long for the word of God, even the food of their souls, as little infants, which are new born, cry for the mother's milk to nourish and sustain them. For there are two births mentioned in the Scripture: the one fleshly and natural, by propagation from the first Adam, whereby original and our birth-sin, as it were a serpent's poison, passeth and transfuseth itself into us; the other heavenly and spiritual, by renovation from the second Adam, which is Jesus Christ, whereby grace and holiness is derived and brought unto us.

In this latter and better birth God is our Father to beget us, 1 Pet. i. 3; the church, his spouse, our mother to conceive us, Gal. iv. 26; the seed whereby we are bred and born again is the word of God, 1 Pet. i. 23; the nurses to feed and to wean and to cherish us are the ministers of the gospel, 1 Thess. ii. 7; and the food whereby we are nourished and held in life is the milk of the word, as in this place. And, therefore, inasmuch as children which are

new born cannot increase in growth and stature, but must needs die and come to dissolution, unless they be continually fed and nourished with wholesome food; it behoveth all the faithful and godly, who are quickened and revived in the life of God, 'as new-born babes, to desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow by it.' I think we need not many words to clear the general drift and scope of this scripture, as we need not many fingers to point at the shining sun. Let us now therefore descend to the particular doctrines which issue and spring from the several branches of this scripture.

First, here is noted a preparation. If we will be bettered and increased by the word, we must be *as new-born babes.* Secondly, our affection and duty when we are new born, we must *desire.* Thirdly, the matter and object of our desire, *the milk of the word.* Fourthly, the quality of the milk, it must be *sincere.* Lastly, the end and use for which we desire it, *that we may grow thereby.*

For the first point, we must be *as new-born babes.* Children, we know, are principally commended for simplicity and harmlessness, Mat. xviii. 4, 1 Cor. xiv. 20; and, therefore, all those which will profit in the school of Christ, and receive light and comfort by the preaching of the word, are here taught to become as babes, to lay aside all maliciousness, and to bring holy and sanctified hearts to the hearing of it: 'Suffer the little babes to come unto me,' saith our Saviour, 'and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven,' Luke xviii. 16; as if we were never fit to hear and learn of Christ till we be reformed, and newly changed into little babes again. For 'the secret of the Lord,' as the psalmist speaketh, 'is with them that fear him,' Ps. xxv. 14; to teach us, that as David would admit no vile person into his counsel, so God will admit no sinful souls into his secrets. 'If any man will do God's will,' saith our Saviour, 'he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or no,' John vii. 17; because no man can learn this doctrine but he that doeth it, as no man could learn the virgins' song but they which sang it, Rev. xiv. 3. And Solomon to the same effect saith, 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge,' Prov. i. 7; as if the first lesson to be wise were to be holy. And, therefore, Christ is said to have 'expounded all things to his disciples apart;' to shew, that if we will have Christ to teach us, we must go apart from the world. So that as a man slippeth off all his clothes when he goeth into a bath to wash him, so we must slip off all our sins when we come to the word to feed us; for wisdom will not rest in the defiled soul, nor in a body that is subject unto sin. As the devil would not dwell but in a house that was swept from godliness,

Luke xi. 25 ; so the graces of God will not come into the heart which is not cleansed from wickedness, for God will not pour new wine but into new vessels, Mat. ix. 17. Therefore, unless you have prepared new hearts, look for no new blessings to be poured on you. The Jews read the Scriptures daily in their synagogues to find Christ; but all in vain, because their veil is not taken away in reading them ; even so do we preach in vain, and you hear in vain, because the veil of sin, which is drawn like a curtain over your hearts, hideth and eclipseth the glorious light of the gospel from you. And therefore, beloved brethren, if you will have the Lord to bless your hearing, and to prosper our preaching, you must wash and rinse out the dregs of sin that are frozen in you ; you must purge the leaven of maliciousness that soureth your souls ; you must cast up your covetousness, and your pride, and your slothfulness, and your partial prejudice, like the serpent which spews up his poison when he goes to drink : for this is the cause why there are so many fruitless and non-proficient hearers, because there are so many sinful and wicked hearers. It is said of Christ, that 'he did not many great works in his own country, for their unbelief's sake,' Mat. xiii. 58 ; so it may be said that God concealeth many great mysteries of faith from us for our sins' sake. Our wickedness stops Christ's mouth, that he will not speak, as the Jews' incredulity chained his hands, that he would not work. Will an embroiderer teach another man's servant his trade, if he know he will hurt him ? No more will God teach the devil's servants his truth, because he knoweth they will offend him. The seed which fell into the thorny ground sprang up very cheerfully for a time, that it might seem to give a great hope of a joyful harvest ; but because thorns grew up with it, at length they choked it, Mat. xiii. 22 : so that unless we cut up the thorny sins which naturally sprout and spring up in us, they will overthrow all the good plants of holy doctrine that are grafted in us. And therefore the prophet Jeremiah willeth us to 'break up the fallow ground, and not to sow among thorns,' Jer. iv. 3 ; as if the heart must first be sanctified, and afterwards instructed, as iron must first be heated, and afterwards be fashioned. In regard whereof, I beseech you, my beloved, in the fear and reverence of God's blessed name, look to your feet when you enter into the house of God ; press not into this marriage feast without a wedding garment ; tread not in the holy sanctuary to hear the word with an unsanctified and defiled, filthy soul.

A man will not keep the Sabbath in his working apparel, but will put on his richest jewels, and array himself in his best attire ;

and yet we make no scruple at all to come unto the Sabbath's exercise with a profane, and a wicked, and our working-day heart. When Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before the Lord, God said, 'I will be honoured of them that draw nigh unto me,' Lev. x. 3; to shew that the Lord doth then look for more holiness at our hands, when, by practice of his service, and the duties of holy religion, we approach and draw more near unto him. Wherefore, to shut up this point, as the beggar, in the Gospel, cast off his cloak to come to Christ, so must we cast off the cloak of our wickedness when we come to hear. We must be as babes if we will be Christ's pupils, because he revealeth knowledge and wisdom to none but babes, Mat. xi. 25. And yet we must not be *babes* only, but *new-born babes*, which have a new soul, a new life, new members, new affections imparted to them. Whereby we learn that it is not enough, in our generation, to redress and reform some one disordered affection in us, but we must be changed and new fashioned in every part. As Saul, when the kingly spirit came upon him, was turned, as it were, into another man, 1 Sam. x. 9; so we, when the word begetteth us anew, must be turned and changed into other men: and therefore they which are implanted into Christ are called 'new creatures,' 2 Cor. v. 17, because neither the old heart, nor the old hand, nor the old ear, nor the old eye, will serve the turn, but all must be molten and new framed again; for 'whatsoever is born of the flesh is flesh,' John iii. 6. If we will have it spirit, that is, fit for God's worship (who 'is a spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit and truth,' John iv. 24), it must be born again of the Spirit. The sense hereof made the prophet David cry out, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me,' Ps. li. 10. And therefore we must not patch and piece out our hearts for God like a beggar's cloak, which is made of shreds; but we must be 'renewed' and thoroughly changed 'in the spirit of our minds,' Eph. iv. 23. When Naaman the leper had washed in Jordan, his flesh came again like the flesh of a young child; if the leprosy of sin be washed and purged from us, all our affections, all our desires will be altered and changed like the flesh of a child. And therefore, if we will fit ourselves to be good hearers, we must not entertain friendship with any sin. As the adder slips off her skin, and the eagle casteth her bill, so we must quite strip ourselves of all our lusts, when, as new-born babes, we come to hear.

'Touch no unclean thing,' saith the Lord, 2 Cor. vi. 17. Because sin will cling to the conscience like bird-lime to a feather, therefore we must not touch it; it must not have a finger of us. When the

devil made his re-entry, he took unto himself seven other spirits worse than himself, Luke xi. 26, Mat. xii. 45. Thus one devil brings more devils, and one sin pulls on more sins, as one crow calleth many crows to a carrion. And therefore, as the leaven was hid in the meal till all was soured, Mat. xiii. 33, so let us never rest seasoning our souls till all be sanctified; for then we be fit to understand every part of God's will, when we be in every part new-born again.

Furthermore, this point discovereth and descrieth a gross error in popery concerning the works of nature, which are wrought and effected by the single virtue and power of our own free will, without the finger and grace of God. For whereas the papists acquit many of them, and clear them from sin (as if an unregenerate man, by the strength and ability of his own will, as it were mounted upon his own wings, were able to aspire to the accomplishment of holy desire), we see that the apostle in this place maketh no other account of the unregenerate than of dead men; and therefore that they must be quickened and new born again, before they can practise or perform any vital action in the life of God. Christ is resembled to a vine, and we to the branches, John xv. 5; for as all the juice and sap, whereby the branches spring and live, issueth and ariseth from the root of the vine, so all the grace and goodness that is in us droppeth and distilleth from the riches of the person of Jesus Christ. Before God blessed Sarah, she was barren and childless; so, until God bless our hearts, they be wicked and fruitless. And therefore, as an unclean fountain cannot send forth sweet water, nor a bad tree bring forth good fruit, no more can the corrupt and wicked heart of the unregenerate bud and bring forth any good and virtuous actions, Mat. xii. 33. Thus much of our condition and preparation, whereby we have learned with how holy and with how sanctified affections we ought to repair to the hearing of the word. Now followeth our duty and affection when we are new born.

As new-born babes, *desire*. We must not be children in wavering and inconstancy; because the apostle saith, that God hath furnished his church with 'pastors and teachers, that we be no more children, wavering and carried about with every wind of doctrine,' Eph. iv. 11, 14; reeling from faith to faith, from religion to religion, like a drunken man from wall to wall. Nor must we be children in understanding and knowledge, because the same apostle saith, 'Brethren, be not children in understanding; but concerning maliciousness be children, but in understanding be of a ripe age,' 1 Cor. xiv. 20. But we must be children in an ardent and burning affection, in thirsting and longing for the word of God: 'Blessed are

they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled, Mat. v. 6; because 'God fills the hungry with good things, but the rich and the wealthy he dismisseth empty,' Luke i. 53. 'The kingdom of God suffereth violence,' Mat. xi. 12, because none can enter at the narrow gate, but such as strive, and throng, and thrust to enter. And therefore, as when the dam feeds her young, every bird gapeth, and struggleth, and stretcheth out the neck to receive the food, so when we come to hear, every man must reach and stretch out his heart to receive the word; for then, indeed, the word worketh most effectually in us, when our hearts before are kindled and inflamed with desire of it, like wax which receiveth any stamp after it is heated. The Shunamite's child, which was raised by Elisha, so soon as his flesh began to wax warm, sneezed, and opened his eyes, and revived again; so, when we wax warm in the spirit, and conceive a desire and a thirst of the word of God, it is an undoubted token that we are born again, and there is breath and a soul within us, and we are not utterly dead in the life of grace. As, contrariwise, they which have not a sharp and hungry appetite to be fed and satisfied with the milk of the word, are but dead carcases, and skins full of rotten bones; so that this city, which should be the glory of the kingdom, may well be termed Golgotha, the place of dead men's skulls, in regard there are so many thousand souls dead in sin, dead in desire, who have no thirst and hunger for the word of God. If they have a bare reading minister, as children have a puppet to play with, they think themselves in a happy estate; as if Elisha's staff could raise the dead child without Elisha, and the word give life without a preacher. It may be they can be content, with Micah, to accept a Levite, if they light upon him; but who will send to Jerusalem, the school of the prophets, as Saul sent to Bethlehem, to fetch David for his comfort? I think you know my meaning: I would not wish you wait till preachers offer themselves to instruct you, but to send to the schools of learning, to provide godly and able men, who may minister the word in due season. Balak, because he longed for Baalam, went to the utmost coast of the country to meet him; the father, because he longed for his prodigal son, ran to kiss him a great way off; David, because he longed for the ark, went and brought it up from Kirjath-jearim. So then, indeed, we desire the word of God, when we will not stay till it come unto us, but we will prevent it, and go to the utmost borders of our country to fetch it home unto us.

We must 'desire the milk of the word,' and we must 'desire it as babes, that is, in three respects. First, they say children, so

soon as they are born into the world, presently cry out for the mother's dug; so must we, so soon as we feel the grace of God to have renewed us, while we are yet hot from the womb, hunger and thirst for the milk of the word. If the mother should defer to give her child suck, were it able to live a month, or a week, or a day? No more is our faith able to sustain and support itself, unless it be presently nourished with the food of life. Christ, so soon as he had raised up Jairus's daughter, commanded her meat, Mark v. 43; as if it were in vain for us to be quickened by the finger of his power, unless we be fed by the word of his grace. And therefore Eden was watered so soon as it was planted, Gen. ii. 8, 10, to shew that we must be strengthened so soon as we are instructed. So that it is a great fault amongst us, when God hath quickened us with his Spirit, and we perceive his graces to bud and to blossom in us, that we presently provide not moisture to nourish and to preserve them. We count it a miracle that Elias lived forty days without food, and yet we, after many years of famine, still post off the feeding of our souls. We think it always too soon to begin, though we begin then when we are ready to end; as the rich man, who then went in hand to enlarge his barns, when he was even at death's door to resign his life, Luke xii. 18, 20. As Christ was sent to heal the ruler's daughter when she was ready to depart, Mat. ix. 18, so many never desire the preacher's company till they be ready to die. They say that the time is not yet come that the Lord's house should be built, nor is it yet time to sanctify their souls for God, nor yet time to provide for the milk of the word. And thus we post off from day to day, from year to year, till we be arrested by death, as the bad lawyer drives off his client from term to term, till the suit be lost. Lot was so long loitering and trifling in Sodom, that the angel was fain to pluck him out with violence; and certainly, unless the Lord by the good means of his providence should pluck us out of ignorance and darkness, wherein we use such trifling, and plunging, and delaying, scarce one of a thousand would be saved. Wherefore, beloved in Christ, if Paul have planted you in the true faith, desire also an Apollos to water you. If the foundation be laid by a master builder, seek out a skilful workman who may roof it also. If you have received one grace, speedily desire the preaching of the word, that it may increase and grow up, by dressing and manuring, into a double grace; for even the best gifts will wither and decay in you unless they be presently watered with the word.

Again, we know that children are so greedily carried with a desire of their food, that when hunger assails them, they neither regard

leisure, nor necessity, nor willingness of the mothers; but, all excuses and business set apart, so soon as they cry for it, they must be fed. Even so we must not think it enough to desire the word, but we must be earnest, and fervent, and importunate in calling and crying for it. A notable parable it is in Luke, how one called for bread in the night; the other answered that he was in bed, which seemed a reasonable answer, and yet it would not serve, Luke xi. 5, &c. So we have long called, my brethren, and we have a great while craved the bread of life. Though it may seem a reasonable answer, that they cannot give it us without impoverishing themselves and their children, who are fat and enriched with the minister's maintenance, yet we ought not to be daunted and discouraged so, but to continue asking still, as Peter continued knocking till the door was opened, Acts xii. 16. For as Jehu was known by his furious marching, so you may know a faithful and true Christian by his zealous perfecting of holy purposes. The mother does not always feed her child for love; but many times to keep it still and quiet, is constrained to leave all and give it suck. So if our mother neither reverenced God nor feared men, yet if we would be earnest and importunate with her, if we would continually cry and call for it, as babes do for the milk, she would feed us at last, if not of love, yet at least to be eased of us. It is an old saying, that he which asketh faintly, teacheth us to deny him. If we would teach men to grant us, we must ask with courage and constancy. And therefore, as Jacob wrestled with the angel, and said, 'I will not let thee go until thou bless me,' so must our requests wrestle with the governors of our land, and say, I will not let you rest until you hear me. This doctrine indicteth and convinceth a great number of us, who, though we have a desire to the word, yet we are so chill, and so cold, and so loose in it, that in every cross event we stand stone still. If it be but a straw, it is a block in our way, because, as Jeremiah speaketh, 'we have no courage for the truth upon earth,' Jer. ix. 3. We have some love to the truth, but we have no courage to labour and adventure for it, as a merchant that would gladly gain, but dares not venture the seas for fear of drowning. If the people be somewhat backward, or a preacher cannot be procured at the first dash, while the fit is fresh upon us, we take our discharge, and cast off the care for ever after. 'The slothful man says, There is a lion in the way;' and so we discourage ourselves in seeking good things, because there is pains in the way. But if we desire the word as babes do milk, we must never rest to desire it until we have it.

Lastly, we know children are continually craving food; a little

pause, and then to the breast again; and therefore we must not be gorged and glutted with once serving, but continually desire it. We must be of Elias's diet, bread and flesh in the morning and evening too; so morning and evening our souls must be fed. The apostle exhorteth, 'Let the word of God dwell in you,' Col. iii. 16; because it must not take up a night's lodging, and so be gone; but it must have a continual residence and abode in our hearts. Though the ground be good, yet it must have the former and the latter rain to make it fertile; and yet many of us think to grow green with one shower, and to go unto heaven with one sermon. It is reported of the faithful, that 'they continued daily in the temple,' Acts ii. 46, as if a Sabbath day's exercise would not serve the turn, unless we had some ordinary repast on the working days also. And therefore, as the lamp burneth continually in the temple without quenching, so the word must continually sound in our ears without intermission. Thus you see, beloved, that if you will 'desire the milk of the word as new-born babes,' you must desire it *presently*, without delay; *importunately*, without fainting; and *continually*, without loathing, never being satisfied with it.

Now we come to the matter and object which we must desire, namely, our food and nourishment in Christ, which is here called 'the milk of the word.' To this our Saviour recalleth us from all our dainties: 'Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which endures to eternal life,' John vi. 27. For the word is everlasting food, and immortal seed, 1 Peter i. 23, 25, because it makes us immortal, and to last for ever. We desire wealth, honour, pomp, and pleasure, and everything save the milk of the word, which we should desire; like Adam, who had all trees, and yet liked none but the forbidden tree. There is a desire of the world, but it is a tare to choke the good corn, Mat. xiii. 22; there is a desire of money, but it is 'the root of all evil,' 1 Tim. vi. 10; there is a desire of the flesh, but it fighteth and wageth war against the spirit, Gal. v. 17; there is a desire of pre-eminence, but it is swelling and ambitious, James iv. 1; there is a desire of revenge, but it ariseth from a rash and carnal spirit, Luke ix. 54; there is a desire of praise, but it is cursed and pharisaical, John v. 44, and xii. 43; the blessed and holy desire is, to desire the milk of the word. When Jonathan saw the honey dropping, he must needs be licking; so when ye see the milk of the gospel, ye must desire to be sucking. Of all the blessings of Canaan this was the chiefest, that it flowed with milk and honey; and this encouraged the Israelites to travel through the desert to possess it. The word is a land flowing

with better milk and honey, and we must not think any pains or toil too much to attain it. God hath many names in scripture to make us conceive more honourably of him; so hath the word many titles to make it more amiable. It is called a lantern, to direct us, Ps. cxix. 105; a medicine, to heal us; a guide, to conduct us; a bit, to restrain us; a sword, to defend us; water, to wash us; fire, to inflame us; salt, to season us; milk, to nourish us; wine, to rejoice us; rain, to refresh us; a treasure, to enrich us; and the key, to unlock heaven gates unto us. Thus the word is named by all things, that we should only desire it instead of all things. And surely therefore the word is in no great request among us, because we know not what blessings it bringeth with it. It is called 'the word of salvation,' because it saveth the soul from pining; as the corn which Joseph sent did Jacob's house from famine. So that as Elisha said of Jordan, 'Wash, and be cleansed;' so may we say of the word, 'Hear it, and be saved.' It is called 'the word of life,' because it reviveth the spirit; as Elisha's bones revived the Israelite. It is called 'the word of reconciliation,' because it is like a golden chain to link God and us together. And in regard hereof it is called 'a jewel of inestimable price,' Mat. xiii. 46; as if all the treature in Egypt were not wealth enough to buy it. And therefore, as David longed for the well of Bethlehem, so we must long and languish for the milk of the word.

The word is resembled to milk in three respects: first, because it is the only food of the faithful, as milk is the only and proper food of babes; secondly, because it is not hard and intricate, but plain and easy to be conceived, as milk is easy to be digested; thirdly, because it is sweet and comfortable to the soul, as milk is sweet and pleasant in taste.

For the first point, the Lord chargeth the Israelites to 'do whatsoever he had commanded, and not to add or diminish anything,' Deut. xii. 32. And Josiah, Joshua, and the rest, when they would renew the Lord's covenant with the people, read nothing but the law; to shew that it was the only rule and square of all their duty. And therefore Isaiah recalleth us 'to the law and to the testimony,' Isa. viii. 20, &c.; and Christ sends us to search the Scriptures, because 'by them we have eternal life,' John v. 39. And therefore the popish church, which, not content with the milk of the gospel, hath broached many heathen traditions and unwritten trash, doth not feed, but choke and poison her children with them, and deprive the Lord's people of this food of life; and, like cursed Philistines, stopping up the wells of water which others have digged, what do

they else but starve and famish so many nations? Well may their hedge-priests, like dry nurses, delight and disport the children for a season; but when hunger bites, when the distressed conscience would be fed and comforted, then they are not able to afford them the very crumbs from Christ's table. And therefore we must needs account the estate of those congregations to be full of dread and horror, which have not this milk of the word to feed their souls; which want a good steward to give them their meat in due season; which, like the Egyptians, lie crawling in the dark, when other churches enjoy most comfortable light. Jacob forsook the blessed land of Canaan when it had no bread; and can we be enamoured of those assemblies where there is no soul's food? If ye did consider, my beloved, that ye cannot be nourished unto eternal life but by the milk of the word, ye would rather desire your bodies might be without souls, than your churches without preachers. I tremble to think how oft you have heard this, and yet how little you have performed it.

For the second point, that the doctrine of the gospel is plain, appeareth when the wise man saith, 'All the words of his mouth are plain and easy to him that will understand,' Prov. viii. 9; 'The testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth light to the simple,' Ps. xix. 7; 'If our gospel be hid,' saith the apostle, 'it is hid unto them that perish,' 2 Cor. iv. 3. For as the sun, which was made to lighten all things, is most light, so the word, which was made to clear all things, is most clear; so that, if there be no communion between light and darkness, and the word of God be 'a lantern unto our feet, and a light unto our paths,' Ps. cxix. 105, then it is evident that the word hath no darkness in it. If we see not all things, the fault is not in the light, but in the eye; as Hagar could not see the water, which yet was before her. And therefore our adversaries falsely charge the Scriptures of exceeding hardness and intricateness. When the spies were returned from Canaan, they could not say but that it was a good land, Num. xiii., but they said it was hard to come by; so the papists must needs confess that the Scripture is a good word; and yet, to dissuade the Lord's people from a serious and diligent search of it, they bring up a slander, and say, It hath many obscurities and by-paths. But as Elisha saw the horses and fiery chariots which his enemies could not see, so, beloved, if ye come with a faithful and a holy heart to the word and to the scripture, ye shall see that plainness and easiness in the doctrine which our adversaries cannot see.

For the third point, that the gospel is the only comfort and consolation of a faithful soul, the prophet Jeremiah saith, 'Thy words

were found by me, and I did eat them ; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart,' Jer. xv. 16. 'Thy testimonies have I taken for an heritage ; for they are the joy of my heart,' Ps. cxix. 111. As a man will be glad to be hired to a nobleman, so David, when he had gotten the milk of the word, rejoiced as much as if he had been hired unto God. And, therefore, in all the story of the Acts, we see joy and comfort to have followed the word, as Elisha followed Elias, and would not leave him. As the wise men rejoiced exceedingly when they saw the star which should lead them to Christ, so ye have matter of great joy and comfort when ye hear the word preached, which shall carry you to heaven, like the chariots which conveyed Jacob into Egypt. There be many Michals in this land, which have mocked king David for dancing before the ark. There be many which term us heady and foolish men, because we come, and throng, and press thus to a sermon. But as Christ said, 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do,' so I, God forgive them, they know not what they say. For if they did feel the calm of conscience, the joy of heart, the consolation of spirit, and the exceeding and everlasting comforts in God, which the faithful possess and enjoy by hearing the word, they would account us not only fools, but stark mad, if all the pleasures, or profits, or dangers of the world should withdraw or withhold us from it. So much for our food ; now we come to the quality of our food. It must be sincere milk.

*Sincere,* both in its savour, and also in effect and operation ; for, as in nourishing our body naturally, our blood cannot be good if our diet be unwholesome, so in feeding our souls spiritually, neither our hearts nor affections, nor our words nor our works, can be good, unless the milk be wholesome whereupon we feed ; and therefore, as our Saviour bids us 'take heed what we hear,' Mark iv. 24, so the apostle, to the like effect, gives a caveat to take heed upon what we feed. For there is a pure and fresh doctrine in Jer. i. 7, and there is a sour and leavened doctrine in Mat. xvi. 6. There is a new wine of the gospel in Mat. ix. 17, and there is a mixed wine in the cup of fornicators, Rev. xvii. 2. There are wholesome words, 2 Tim. i. 13, and there are corrupt and unwholesome words, Eph. iv. 29. There is a doctrine of God, John vii. 16, and there is a doctrine of the devil, 1 Tim. iv. 1. There is an edifying and a building word, Eph. iv. 29, and there is a fretting and cankered word, 2 Tim. ii. 17. As the prophet's children cried out, 'Death in the pot,' so some places may say, Death in our food ; and therefore it is that we are so often forewarned in the Scripture to 'beware of

the leaven of the scribes and pharisees,' Mat. xvi. 6; to 'take heed of the prophets, which come to us in sheep's clothing,' Mat. vii. 15; to 'beware that no man seduce us through philosophy,' Col. ii. 8; to 'try the spirits, whether they be of God or no,' 1 John iv. 1; as we must taste our food before we digest it, and try our gold before we treasure it. Christ tasted the vinegar, but would not drink; so when we taste false doctrine, we must reject it. There are many greedy of milk, but it is dragon's milk; they take great pains to learn, but it is to learn the language of Ashdod, and not the language of Canaan; they run to hear, but to hear fables and untruths. Nimrod was as painful in building of Babel as Solomon in rearing the holy temple. Micah entertained a Levite, and consecrated his silver, but to an idolatrous worship. The Israelites melted their ear-rings, but to erect a calf. Jezebel fed a great rout of trencher-chaplains, but to honour Baal. Many desire to have milk, but they will have it from dragons, poisoned; and therefore we are here warned to desire the sincere milk, &c.; for the Lord will not have the wine of his word to be mingled and mashed with the water of human inventions: 'He that hath my word, let him speak faithfully,' Jer. xxiii. 28. What is the chaff to the wheat? God would not have one field sowed with two kinds of grain, to shew us that he would not have one heart filled with two kinds of doctrine. Dagon could not stand with the Lord's ark; no more can Christ's truth hold any fellowship with the word of error. And therefore, as the ministers must beware that they make not merchandise of the word of God, so must the people also, that they drink not any milk but that which is sincere. And here ye ought, my beloved, more carefully to behave yourselves, as ye see the devil more subtilly to assault you; and under the cloak of zeal and reformation, to bring into the Lord's sanctuary most wicked profanation.

As a man will be more wary to try every piece of gold, when he sees many counterfeit and Flemish angels to fly abroad; so when ye see many sorts of doctrine crawling daily like locusts out of the bottomless pit, ye must be more diligent to taste and try which is sound and sincere.

It followeth, *that ye may grow by it.* Here is the end of our hearing, that we may grow in grace, and increase in the faith of righteousness. For the faithful are called the 'trees of righteousness,' because they must be always springing, Isa. lxi. 3; 'living stones,' because they must grow in the building, 1 Peter ii. 5; 'good

servants,' which must trade and traffic the Lord's talents to increase, Mat. xxv. 21, 23; 'fruitful branches,' which must be purged and pruned by the hand of the heavenly husbandman, John xv. 2. Isaac must not always hang on Sarah's breast, but must be weaned; so we must not always be children, but grow up and increase, and profit more and more. As the star never ceased till it came over Christ, so we must never rest walking till we come to God. If we have faith, we must proceed 'from faith to faith,' Rom. i. 17; if we have love, we must 'increase and abound in love,' 1 Thes. iii. 12; if we have zeal, we must endeavour to be 'consumed with zeal,' John ii. 17; if we be 'liberal to the distressed saints' of God, Rom. xii. 13, we must double our liberality, as Elkanah gave Hannah a double portion, 1 Sam. i. 5. If we read the Scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 15, we must go on and 'continue in prayer,' Col. iv. 2. If we 'give alms,' we must step on one foot farther, and give them 'with cheerfulness,' 2 Cor. ix. 7. And thus, as the eagle continually soareth till she come to the highest, so must we still increase till we come to perfection. Let us be 'led forward unto perfection'; Heb. vi. 1; as if a faithful man were like a ship under sail, never anchoring till he arrive at heaven. The greater is our sin, which hear, and hear, but are never the more reformed for our hearing; like Pharaoh's ill-favoured kine, which devoured the fat kine, but remained as ill-favoured as they were before; so many of us, when we have lugged the breast almost dry, after twenty or thirty years feeding are as scragged and lean as we were before. No man almost among us is more zealous, no man more faithful, no man more constant for the truth, no man more fervent in religion, no man more sanctified, no man more diligent in practising, nor less vicious now, than he was an hundred sermons ago; as if we were night-black ravens, which cannot be washed with all the soap of the gospel. Though we have long heard, and still desire to hear, yet we do not grow by our hearing; we are very dwarfs in Christ, scant able to go, little in faith, little in love, little in patience, little in obedience, little in zeal; like Zaccheus, so little that we cannot see Christ. This is an undoubted evidence that we have not fleshly but stony hearts, which, though they be washed, yet they cannot be watered with the sweet showers of the gospel. For is there not in every tavern, and in every shop, and in every house, and in every hall, as much covetousness, as much bribery, as much cozening, as much wantonness, as much maliciousness, after this long shine of the word, as there was before? Are we not now as slothful in God's service, as dissolute in the practice of Christian duties, as dishonest

in our dealings between man and man, as proud in our attire, as light in our behaviour, as hypocritical abroad, as sinful at home, as we were before? And what is the reason thereof, but that we come to the fountain rather to draw than to drink; rather to hear than to be bettered and sanctified, and increased by our hearing? One sort heareth not at all, like Eutychus, which was sleeping when Paul was preaching, Acts xx. 9; another sort forgets all, as Nebuchadnezzar did his dream; the most part remembers all, but will make no practice of it, as a carpenter, which should square all by rule, and sticks it at his back, and works all by aim. But assuredly, my beloved, it were better you never heard, than thus in despite of God to abuse your hearing. 'If I had not spoken to them,' saith Christ, 'they should have had no sin; but now have they no cloak for their sin,' John xv. 22. What cloak can ye have, when God offereth grace, and ye wilfully refuse it? As meat, the more a man receiveth, the more it distempereth, if it be not digested; so the more ye learn, and the more ye hear, the greater is your sin, if ye grow not by it. If the servant which hid his talent in a napkin was so handled, what shall be done to them which suffer their talent to perish? And therefore every man must 'beware how he heareth,' Luke viii. 18; every man must take heed that he 'receive not the grace of God in vain,' 2 Cor. vi. 1; that he 'desire the milk of the word,' to be bettered and 'increased by it.' Wherefore, whosoever thou be that hearest this, and wilt hear others, search thy conscience, whether thou be grown in any virtue since thou heardest the last sermon; consider what sin thou hadst last Sabbath, which thou hast not this Sabbath. If thou find no change, then the word hath not had his working in thee; thou art not increased by the food which thou receivest. Will not a man be angry to set his child to school, and find him always at his A B C? So God will be displeased if we be negligent and slack, and never take out his lessons, but stand at a stay. I know many of you will give me the hearing of this, as you have done many of my brethren heretofore; but as the worm struck Jonah's gourd, and it died in the morning: so by the next morning a greedy worm of covetousness, or the like sin, will have perished all. If it do so, know 'the Judge standeth at the door,' ready every hour to summon you to death, to make your appearance at the bar of justice, and to give up your account for every talent, yea, for every lesson that you have learned and left unpractised. As for you, if any of you walk in dutiful obedience to the word, I beseech you in the fear of God, and in the bowels and love of Jesus Christ, that ye will abound and in-

crease yet more and more, and contend by all means to put in practice and exercise those things that you hear; that so at length, when ye be ripe for the sickle, and the great day of harvest be come, ye may be gathered as good corn into the Lord's garner, and be invested in the holy heavens with that blessed kingdom which God hath provided for them that serve and fear him. Amen.

END OF VOL I.

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